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SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES OF SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS

Bulletin 230

LESTER K. ADE

Superintendent of Public Instruction



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
HARRISBURG — 1939

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(Continued Inside Back Cover)

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LESTER K. ADE
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Harrisburg, 1939

FOREWORD

The small rural school continues to be a vitally important part of the American public school system, serving between one-third and one-half of the children of elementary school age. Most recent figures indicate that 5,507 one-teacher schools, 152 two-teacher schools, and 246 three- or four-teacher elementary schools are in use at the present time in Pennsylvania. While many of these will be eliminated within the next few years, nevertheless it may be years before they can all, or nearly all, be replaced.

It is important that these schools give the highest possible level of educational service to the children who attend them. In many instances they are handicapped in their effort to do this by the relatively low economic status of the communities in which they are situated. Their problem is difficult, too, because of the complex number of activities they must carry on. Yet educational leaders see in these schools, particularly in the one-teacher school, certain conditions which may be made favorable to the well-balanced growth of children. They feel that it is possible for such schools to offer a relatively high level of educational opportunity.

This bulletin discusses the possibilities inherent in most small rural schools. It points out the similarity of purpose of all elementary schools, then considers the opportunities peculiar to the small school situated in a rural area. Often the success or failure of these schools in meeting real needs of children depends upon the alertness of the teacher. Does she see the possibilities in her environment for rich learning experiences? Does she sense and use the special advantages of the organization of her school? Is she aware of the serious lacks in the background of her children? Is she skillful in devising ways of overcoming them? The descriptions presented here of what some teachers are doing in their schools may help others to see further possibilities in their own situations.

Since many of the opportunities discussed are equally available to one- and two-teacher schools and to other small schools located in rural areas, this bulletin should be of value to teachers in all types of rural schools.

In order that it may be of maximum value, three suggestions are made for its use. The first is that teachers be urged to study it and discuss it in small groups in preference to using it only as a reference.

Every teacher is capable of making helpful contributions to others, and the small group discussion, centered around such material as that emphasized in this bulletin, offers a helpful way of exchanging such contributions.

Arising from such discussions should come the general realization that many teachers are doing types of work quite as valuable as the activities reported. Outstanding instances should be brought to the attention of the Department of Public Instruction so that over a period of time a much broader picture of what rural teachers are doing can be assembled and made available to others.

Finally, it is recognized that many questions will arise concerning the types of school activities discussed by the bulletin. It is suggested that teachers be encouraged to list these questions so that they can be made the bases for discussions when representatives of the Division of Early Childhood and Elementary Education visit the area or are available for conference.

LESTER K. ADE

March, 1939

Superintendent of Public Instruction

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This bulletin was prepared and written by Miss Lois M. Clark, Adviser of Early Childhood and Elementary Division under the direction of Dr. Paul L. Cressman, Director of the Bureau of Instruction, and Dr. Cecelia Unzicker Stuart, Chief of the Division of Early Childhood and Elementary Education.

Acknowledgment is due to many teachers who sent detailed reports of activities in their schools. Direct recognition of these contributions is made through footnotes whenever such reports are used. The work of Miss Helena McCray, former Elementary Education Adviser, in establishing contacts with rural teachers over a period of years was of particular value in securing many of these contributions.

In Chapters V and VI, a number of direct quotations are made from children's writings. With two exceptions these are taken from reports especially prepared by the children of the Franklin School, Springfield Township, Bucks County, or from articles appearing in the *Franklin Review*, their school paper.

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Special Opportunities of Small Rural Schools

I. THE SMALL RURAL SCHOOL SHARES THE PURPOSES AND AIMS OF ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

In planning how to use the special resources of our small rural schools, we must keep in mind the purposes for which these schools exist. What we choose to do in any of our elementary schools depends primarily on what we want these schools to give the boys and girls who attend them. Actually, what we want for the boys and girls of rural areas is the same as what we want for children in other types of communities. The goals for which all elementary teachers work are the same; what is done in different types of schools may need to vary, but only because the conditions under which we work and the experience background of the children differ.

A. THE AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In early times schools were needed to teach children to read, to write, to spell, and to use numbers for figuring—abilities which everyone needed, but which the family could not or did not develop satisfactorily. As the available knowledge about the world and universe grew, each family's "world" grew also, and it became necessary for the important facts about the world and its people and how they lived to be included in the curriculum. Other changes have been made in the work of the school as new needs have been discovered or as old ones ceased to be met satisfactorily by agencies outside the school.

1. PURPOSES HAVE CHANGED

Today our world has changed so greatly and our understanding of children and their needs has increased to such an extent that what we expect the elementary school to do is very different from what we at one time thought desirable. We no longer feel that it is enough to give children the skills and the specific knowledge that formerly made up very nearly all of the school's teachings. We no longer believe that mastery of subject matter is the real goal to be worked for. We see, rather, that the real concern of the elementary school is with desirable growth and development of each child along lines that fit him to live as a valuable member of society, and as an individual having a personality distinctly his own.

What the elementary school wants for its children is very like what the best parents want for their children, and is accomplished

best when the school and the child's home are agreed on these goals and are working together to accomplish them. It is made up of many specific skills, habits, items of information, ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, and of broad general understandings. Yet none of these can be worked for entirely as separate items, for they have value only as a part of the larger pattern of the child's developing personality.

2. PERSISTENT PROBLEMS OF LIVING MUST BE MET

In the broadest sense, the school seeks to help the child grow from babyhood to adulthood in such a way that he is able to meet the problems that persist in daily life in ways that satisfy him and are helpful to his associates. The child's home has already begun this task, but it needs the help of the school and of other community interests if it is to enable him to make the best possible adjustment to all important phases of life. For one of his chief needs is to get his bearings in the world as he is likely to know it, and to do this his experiences must gradually extend beyond his home until he is able to adjust to all types of situations that he will need to meet.

B. ORIENTATION IS NEEDED

This need of the child for orientation is the foundation of much that the school does. He must come to understand many things about the world in which he lives and how the human race has come to live on the earth. He needs also to understand himself as a growing, developing, personality, and what he is capable of being. And, while he is gaining these understandings, he must acquire the attitudes, skills, and abilities that will help him to fit into this world that he is discovering and perhaps make some small contribution to its further development.

1. THE WORLD OF NATURE MUST BE UNDERSTOOD

Though many things in our world are man-made, we live primarily in a world of nature, a world whose laws and principles existed long before man came to rule the earth. The sun, the moon, the earth, and the stars follow an orderly schedule in their movements through space. The seasons follow each other in unvaried sequence, each repeating year after year the same general patterns of rebirth, growth, maturation, and decline. Plants and animal matter decay, giving back to the soil food materials to be used in the growth of new plant life and, eventually, new animal life. Man plants seed in this soil, and for a time reaps crops, sooner or later to discover the inexorable law of nature that plant food once used must be replaced or plants can no longer grow strong and vigorous.

Man must understand the workings of this world of nature if he is to use its offerings to maintain a high level of life for his race on the earth. The foundation for this understanding begins very early in the life of the child. His years in the elementary school

should give him rich experiences that will help to lead him toward an increasingly fuller understanding of the broad general principles which govern the universe.

2. WHAT MAN HAS MADE OF HIS WORLD CONCERNS US, TOO

Based upon and developing out of this world of nature is a man-made world which also must be understood. Just as the child, while growing to adulthood, must have experiences that help him sense and respect the orderliness of the world of nature, so, too, must he learn that man is a part of that same world and governed by similar laws. We do not yet know the laws which govern human nature as well as we know the laws governing some other phases of the universe; yet they are just as real, and they function as relentlessly. An important part of the child's orientation lies in discovering how man lives upon the earth, the problems he faces and how he meets them at varying times and under varying conditions. This adjustment, too, is begun in the early years of the child's life, but the school contributes immeasurably to the expansion of experiences necessary to true understanding.

A great part of the child's understanding in these general areas will not come until years beyond the elementary school. Yet it is here that foundations must be built, for it is here that the child first comes into contact with an environment that is rapidly expanding to take in more and different types of people, larger areas of space, and more extended periods of time. It is at this time, also, that he is most actively concerned with the "why" and "what" of things which attract his attention but which he does not understand. The adequacy with which he is helped to understand what puzzles him here will largely determine the attitudes he takes toward unsolved problems, toward nature and his fellowman in years to come.

If these years in the elementary school are to help him discover his true relation to this world of which he is a part, then he must know also what he himself brings to this relationship. He must be helped to find his most persistent interests and to discover the capacities he has which will enable him to contribute most to the well-being of others, as well as to experience the greatest possible personal satisfaction through giving them expression. His potentialities will include those which make possible fine relationships with people and the use of creative and imaginative abilities, as well as those which lead to tangible mental or manual contributions to human need.

3. SKILLS ARE NECESSARY FOR PARTICIPATION

If the child as he matures is to get his bearings in the world as he will experience it, he needs more than understanding of nature, of society, and of himself. For he must be a participating member of that world to some degree at every step of the way, and effective participation demands appropriate skills.

Among the most essential skills are those which will enable him to get along happily with people. The well-adjusted six-year-old has already discovered some of these skills when he enters school; school with its larger group and its greater variety of personalities may demand of him new or modified ways of dealing with people. And the child whose skills in getting along with people are not satisfactory even within the limited social group that is his family, will need much help if he is to make desirable adjustments to people. Each boy or girl will present a unique problem, and the elementary school must try to help all children reach a level where they know how to adjust themselves to other people without too much dominance or submission, but with a wholesome regard for themselves as well as others.

The elementary school should be expected to help every child develop needed manipulatory skills, so that he can use his hands and his entire body skillfully in doing the things he needs or wants to do. It should help him develop the skills needed for expression of his special interests and talents. It should give him the skills with which to get whatever information he needs to solve problems of concern to him. And it may need to give him some beginning skills necessary for participation in the economic life of his community.

C. INTEGRATION IS AN IMPORTANT NEED

Orientation to the world in which he lives is a broadly inclusive need and makes many demands on the elementary school. Yet emphasis on it alone may cause us to neglect a closely related aspect of child growth and development. For it is of first importance that the child shall continue as a unique person having ideas and ideals that are his own—a person worthy of being respected because he is himself, not a copy of someone else's individuality, and because when a problem arises he faces it squarely, using all his resources to solve it.

This means that we must help the child learn to make decisions and choices that are consistent with his own personality, rather than reflections of "what teacher says," or of what he thinks other people want him to say or do. It means, too, that we must help him face situations directly and meet them with all the resourcefulness at his command. If his personality is to be socially desirable, he must decide questions according to standards that are in harmony with the best interests of himself and others. But whatever the decision or choice, he must learn to make it *his* decision, *his* choice, and he must face its consequences.

1. THE CHILD MUST LEARN TO CHOOSE WISELY

In order to make consistently desirable choices, the child will need to learn what makes some things "right" and others "wrong," so that he can move forward from the stage where he of necessity must

think, "I won't do this because mother says it is wrong," to the stage where he himself understands why something is wrong and makes his own choice. He will also need to discover which things are of such importance to him as a person that he will not compromise where they are concerned, and which things he is willing, if necessary, to disregard as of lesser importance.

The understanding of these two fundamentally important matters develops gradually throughout the entire period of childhood and continues into mature years, and at no point can the child be expected to make choices unaided which are beyond his ability. But whenever a choice is called for he should be helped to choose for himself, insofar as he has the background and experience to make a wise choice possible. Or, if the problem is one which he is not equipped to meet, he should be helped to understand, to the extent that he is able, why the choice made for him is the most desirable one. He may need guidance, also, in learning to take into consideration his own preferences when making decisions, and in accepting the consequences of his decisions once they are made. With the right guidance from his teacher, these years in the elementary school can go far toward establishing in him the habit of facing difficulties squarely, within the limits of his experience and ability, and an attitude of open-minded seeking to understand both himself and the world about him better. With these qualities well on the way toward establishment, he will have the foundation for a happy, well-integrated life.

D. THE CHILD MUST DISCOVER HIS OWN INTERESTS AND ABILITIES

In the discussions of the child's needs for orientation and for integration, a further need has been stressed—that of discovering what he is most able to do well and what he likes to do. This does not mean that the child during his years in the elementary school can or should choose the vocation he wishes to follow as an adult. But it does mean that he should be discovering the specific abilities and interests that may lead later to choice of vocation, and that he is finding the avocational or recreational interests that make his life full and satisfying.

E. WE BELIEVE IN A DEMOCRATIC WAY OF LIFE

A further need, implied in the consideration of the child's adjustment to people and to social organization, is of such importance that it should be consciously worked for in every school. That is the need to discover the true meaning of democratic living. Belief in a democracy has been a vital force in the development of the Nation. Yet we realize that we are far from achieving a true democracy, and that in general we are not very clear as to what democracy means.

1. DEMOCRACY MUST BE LIVED

When we understand that democracy is founded basically on a belief in the worth of every human being, we see that democracy in government and democracy in business are possible only as people learn to have respect for other people in *all* contacts with them. The way in which members of a family treat each other; the relationship of friend to friend, of teacher to pupil, of pupil to pupil; the way in which members of a committee or a club work together; these are the relationships in which democracy is lived or not lived. The label "democracy" is not important, and perhaps should not be stressed, lest it become trite and meaningless; but the relationships of mutual respect and consideration, of working together for goals we share, are of such importance that they should be major objectives of the elementary school.

2. SCHOOLS OFFER VALUABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEMOCRATIC LIVING

That many schools recognize their responsibility for the development of democratic living is evident in reports of their activities. "Schools for a Growing Democracy," is the title chosen by Tippet (20)* and his associates for a report of the activities of a school in South Carolina. Other groups in California (2), in Chicago, Illinois (14), and in North Carolina (10), show a similar concern for broad growth and development, in their statements of the objectives of the elementary school.

* Throughout this bulletin, numbers in parentheses refer to books or magazine articles listed in the Bibliography at the end of the bulletin.

II. THE SMALL RURAL SCHOOL IS LIKE ALL OTHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN ITS ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

If we are to think of the elementary school as a place where teachers are concerned chiefly with child growth and development, if we are to think of that growth as growth in orientation to the world, growth in personal self-discovery, growth in development of integratedness, and growth in democratic living, we must give serious thought to the kind of school needed to accomplish these purposes. The essential qualities of that school will be the same for the one-teacher or other small school as for larger elementary schools.

The school experience of a child should be a unified one, though it is influenced significantly by a number of factors, no one of which predominates. One of these is the classroom itself, its arrangement and equipment, the materials and conditions outside the classroom which relate to it and affect it. Another has to do with the personal relationships of people who influence it—the teacher and her associates and co-workers, and the pupils. The teacher's methods and procedures in carrying on the major work of the school are another. The major problems or materials around which the children's experiences center are of key significance, as are the activities carried on by the children in living these experiences.

A. CURRICULUM CONTENT IS IMPORTANT TO CHILD GROWTH

We no longer believe that subject matter mastery is the real goal of education. Rather, we think as Rugg states in his chapter on "The New Article of Faith" (19), that child interest is the basis of our educational program. Yet true learning involves a great deal of subject matter. Children learn by experiencing, and they must experience *something*. If the something experienced is to have significance for life out of school as well as for life in school, it must be related to the persistent needs or problems of people. These problems—how to keep well, how to make a living, how to get along with people, how to enjoy beauty, how to adjust to the environment—are specific aspects of the need for orientation, integration, and self-discovery. What areas of knowledge and skill are involved in the experiences of children in trying to solve these problems?

1. THE CHILD LEARNS ABOUT HIS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Certainly there are many experiences the chief outcome of which will be a knowledge of the world of nature. What is it like? How does it work? Why is it like this? These are questions children ask concerning things about them. Plants, animals, the weather, electricity, magnets, engines, and many other phenomena are the cause of endless questions from the alert child. The effort to answer

them satisfactorily will lead the child to further questions and to a feeling of familiarity and identity with the universe of which he is a part. Hence, nature study and science form an area of knowledge important to the elementary school.

2. HE IS INTERESTED IN THE WORLD OF PEOPLE, TOO

Perhaps even more extensive will be the experiences which result in increased understanding of man and how he has learned to work with nature in improving his ways of living. For the story of human life on the earth is a long and varied story. How *do* men live in different places on the earth? *Why* do they live in these ways? Climate and other geographic factors help to determine the answer, but what of ideals of freedom, or democracy, or the like? Of what importance are these in deciding how people live? What are the problems people must face repeatedly? How are these problems met by people under varying circumstances? How have they been met at various times in the history of mankind? How are we meeting them now? Are we satisfied that we have found the best solutions for us, under present conditions? These questions fall into a general area of knowledge that may be thought of as social studies, because inter-relationships of people are involved.

3. THE CULTURAL ARTS ARE IMPORTANT

Not only has man learned to work with nature and to adjust to his fellowmen in partially satisfactory ways; he has also recorded his accomplishments and given expression to his thoughts, ideals, and hopes through the arts of music, literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, and the like. No child has achieved real orientation to the world today until he has been helped to understand and appreciate in some degree this highly important phase of man's life on the earth. Nor can he meet problems of living in a truly integrated way unless he has become a well-adjusted person through discovering and developing the means of expressing his own creative impulses, hopes, and ideals. Hence the child during his early years in school must have many meaningful experiences with those phases of the arts that have value for him.

4. THE CHILD'S OWN BODY INTERESTS HIM

Still another important area of knowledge is that which helps the child answer questions about his own body, how it works, and how to care for it. This, too, must be acquired through experiences which are meaningful to each child, rather than through a stereotyped presentation of general information about the human body.

5. SKILLS ARE DEVELOPED

In addition to the areas of understanding here discussed, there must be curriculum provision for the development of needed skills and tool abilities. Some skills are needed as tools usable in gaining

more extended understanding of the world about us; some are valuable chiefly because they enable us to participate actively in that world; and some serve chiefly as means of self-expression.

The skills needed are of several types. Those related to the arts are particularly valuable for purposes of self-expression. The language skills—reading, oral speech, composition, writing, spelling, and the like—are valuable in all three areas: extending understandings, participating in life activities, and self-expression. Certain mathematical skills are needed to help us understand our present world and how we have made it what it is, as well as to perform some of the activities of daily living. The skills needed in keeping physically well may or may not be developed adequately in the home. In either case the school must strengthen and reinforce them.

The child who is to be well adjusted needs also to develop skill in the use of his body, so that he can take part with satisfaction in activities that interest him, and in order that he can use it to give expression to his feelings and ideas which require body movement, manipulation of materials, or some other control of physical abilities.

B. METHODS AND PROCEDURES MUST SUIT THE PURPOSES

It is clear that the curriculum is not to be a matter of subject matter mastery for its own sake; rather it is to be composed of numerous experiences arising from real problems and genuine interests of children. This implies that the method of the classroom will be one of children and teacher together clarifying problems, so that they are clear as to what they want to know; of searching for information in order to solve their problems; of organizing and evaluating the information they find, to be sure it is dependable and suited to their need; of reaching conclusions concerning their problems and the answer or answers they have found; and of judging whether or not the answers they have found are satisfactory.

If the child's school experience is to be broad enough to give him all the meanings, informations and skills that are found to be essential, he must be helped to discover problems or needs of which at first he is unaware. Hence an important aspect of the skill of the alert teacher lies in her ability to supply an interesting and stimulating environment and to make children conscious of what is happening about them. She makes sure that many things are happening that can lead to valuable and needed learnings; then she uses the leads which arouse greatest pupil interest and sees that worthwhile experiences take place.

1. CHILD PARTICIPATION IS THE KEY-NOTE

In following leads that have caught the interest of children, she makes certain that every child, insofar as he is able, has opportunity

to seek, organize, and present needed information; has need and opportunity to express his own ideas meaningfully; has opportunity to make decisions and to be responsible for their consequences; and has opportunity to explore various types of related activities. She sees that he is encouraged to be alert to whatever is going on about him, and to be concerned about *why* things are.

This teacher, recognizing that everything which affects the schoolroom or its members is of interest and concern to all of them, helps them to share all problems of living together happily. So these children face with the teacher such questions as: How can we make our schoolroom more attractive? How can we plan our work so that some of us will not be taking part in noisy activities while others want to read quietly? How can we improve our reading to get information?

C. PEOPLE MUST RESPECT AND HELP EACH OTHER

The relationships between people in a school situation have a very important influence on child development. If orientation to a world of people is to be real, not just composed of ideas about people gained from looking on and talking about them, the child must have an abundance of opportunities to adjust to people in varying situations. Two preschool tots, learning to play together in the sand pile, are learning social adjustment. A group of children facing a difficulty that has arisen on the playground, or working together to get information needed in solving a problem in which they are all interested, are also learning social adjustment. In both instances the adjustment they are learning to make is infinitely more valuable, because more life-like and deeper in quality, than that learned by the child who sits still in his seat and does not talk to his neighbor because that is the rule of the classroom.

Therefore the elementary school which is to help the child attain a high level of growth in adjustment to people, must make sure that many situations arise in which real problems of adjustment need to be faced. It must plan, also, that the teacher will be ready to give the right kind of guidance in meeting these situations. Hence, a school situation is called for where children share in planning, carrying on, and evaluating what is done; where many natural situations calling for small- or large-group cooperation are encountered; where contacts with people extend beyond the classroom to take in many related groups; where there is helpful guidance in establishing right pupil relations and right relations of pupils with others, as well as in carrying on the immediate work of the class.

D. THE SCHOOL'S EQUIPMENT AIDS CHILD GROWTH¹

The physical surroundings and arrangements of this school are also important, for they, too, influence the child's growth. Obviously the

¹For discussions of school equipment suited to child growth, see the following: California Curriculum Commission. *Teachers' Guide to Child Development*, (1). Tippet, James S., and Others. *Schools for a Growing Democracy*, Chaps IV, VI, (20). Wofford, Kate V. *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*, Chap. XV, (21).

school must provide conditions that conserve and develop the health of the child—freedom from disease, muscular strength and coordination, good eyesight and hearing, and similar qualities. It must, in addition, be attractive and homelike, so that it may help to develop good taste, and it must tend to stimulate mental alertness and curiosity. Then, too, it must provide well-organized sources of information, so that curiosity aroused can be satisfied.

E. THE TEACHER HAS A BROAD RESPONSIBILITY²

It is evident that the teacher takes a very different part in this school than in the subject-matter-mastery school of earlier times. Scholarship is still important, for she needs to be well informed in many more areas than were once expected of her. But other qualities rival scholarship in the qualifications of the teacher whose purpose is to guide child growth.

She must be clever at discovering the *real* interests of children, so that school experiences can be genuinely meaningful to them.

She must feel it imperative that she *know* the significant things about the experience background of each child, and the things that concern him vitally.

She must be interested in and alert to what is happening in the world about her, in the local community, the state, the nation, the whole world.

She must have an absorbing curiosity, not be satisfied with easy, superficial answers.

She must have good judgment in choosing which things have greater value and which have lesser value in the growth of her children.

She must have command of materials and sources of information, and of a workable system of recording pertinent information about children.

She must find real pleasure and the zest of adventure in the simple things which interest children.

F. REAL LIVING TAKES PLACE IN SUCH SCHOOLS

The school which best fulfills the purposes set for it by our present understanding of the meaning of education may be located in a well-favored city suburb, or it may be in one of the relatively isolated rural areas of the state. Wherever it is, it will be called successful because it meets the real needs of the children of its community. And, just as the school wants for all the children what the best home wants for its children, so the school will achieve these purposes as the best home achieves them—through pleasant, healthful, stimulating surroundings; broadening experiences with an expanding world of people, nature, and objects; and helpful, understanding guidance

² For a helpful discussion of the teacher's responsibility in the modern educational program, see California Curriculum Commission, *Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades*, Chapter III (2).

from adults who are alert and interested in the world about them and who derive wholesome pleasure from their association with children.

G. SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

A number of books are available which discuss helpfully the general characteristics of modern elementary schools. Two (1), (2) published by the California Curriculum Commission give excellent accounts of such work in progress, as well as theoretical discussions of its essential characteristics. Rugg and Shumaker's book (19) is also helpful.

Within the past few years a number of helpful books and pamphlets have become available which discuss modern education as it develops in the rural elementary school. One of the first of these was written by Collings in 1923, and describes *An Experiment With a Project Curriculum* (3). Books by Dunn and Everett (7) and by Gustin and Hayes (10) are based on first hand experiences in putting the theories of modern education in practice in rural schools. Two others, one by Wofford, (21) and the other published as the 1938 Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education of the N.E.A. (15) discuss in considerable detail many of the problems of education in these schools. A short article by Doctor Dunn entitled, "Modern Education in Small Rural Schools" (5) gives a valuable brief statement on the subject.

III. THE SMALL RURAL SCHOOL HAS CERTAIN DISTINCTIVE FEATURES WHICH AFFECT ITS PROBLEMS AND PROCEDURES

Although the ultimate purposes and general characteristics of the small rural school are the same as those of other elementary schools, it has certain features which distinguish it from them and which affect its day-to-day activities and procedures significantly. Its setting in a rural community is responsible for a number of these, making it probable that the immediate interests of children and the background which makes learning experiences meaningful to them will be somewhat different. Other distinctive features of the one- or two-teacher school arise from the form of organization made necessary by the widely varied age range of children to be taught by one teacher.

A. THE SCHOOL IS LOCATED IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

The contrast between rural and non-rural life is not as sharply drawn as it was at one time. Many of the experiences once limited to the urban child are now a regular part of the life of the rural child as well, and many of their interests are the same. Yet it is still typically true that rural communities are proportionately less "man-made" than are the more thickly populated centers; that the life of plants, animals, the sky, and the earth can be experienced and observed more continuously and more completely than elsewhere. Hence, these communities give to children who grow up in them the basis for a much needed sense of proportion and balance in their ideas about man and the universe. They give background for the development of a sense of the orderliness and inevitability of nature's activities, and of man's need to respect and conform to its laws.

1. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE STRONG IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

The rural community also gives opportunity for adjustments to people in ways somewhat different from those typical of urban centers. Rural people are seldom isolated now as they were in earlier days. Yet the average rural child still meets fewer people and takes part in fewer group activities outside the home than do urban children. He has fewer casual acquaintances, and his contacts with the members of his immediate family and of the community are probably more permanent, and of a deeper quality. He takes part in more of the activities of his parents and shares with them the facing of problems of daily living more frequently than would be possible in other types of occupational groups where the work activities of wage earners take place away from home.

Property in a rural community is usually owned or controlled by people who live in the community and are personally concerned with what happens to it. Consequently, community and neighborhood ties are strong, helping to give the child who grows up there a much

needed sense of permanency and a feeling that everyone has some responsibility to his community. Public opinion is a strong and a highly personal force where people know each other well.

2. FARMING IS THE CHIEF OCCUPATION

Farming as the chief occupation of the rural community gives several distinctive opportunities to the school. Farming is one of the few industries which remain simple enough that most of the processes used in completing its work are carried on within the farm's limits or nearby. It is still largely a family industry where the cooperation of every member is necessary if the enterprise is to succeed. And it is a productive industry, creating raw materials to be used in many other industries and needed food for people in all lines of work, thus serving important human needs.

B. CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY VARY

We are frequently told that one serious handicap to a completely satisfying life in rural communities lies in their lack of so-called "cultural" opportunities. It is undoubtedly true that this lack does exist with respect to opportunity to experience some of the finest cultural developments of the past. In certain respects, however, no real lack exists, but a difference in the type of cultural development that has taken place. As one observer¹ notes: "—nearly every rural American community has not only economic resources but also a strikingly homogeneous wealth of cultural resources."

1. COUNTRY PEOPLE HAVE THEIR OWN ARTS AND CRAFTS

"An Exhibition of the Rural Arts," held in connection with the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United States Department of Agriculture, shows clearly what a great wealth of self expression through art forms has been developed throughout rural America, in spite of the neglect it has received. M. L. Wilson, Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, writing about the Exhibition, says: "The rural arts and crafts have long been ignored and underestimated. They have not been given the attention that they deserve. The present exhibit has been assembled to show just what these country arts are. Once they are really known they will be appreciated and the too general neglect of them will end."²

If we think of the rural arts as Allen H. Eaton defines them, "the things which country people make for their own use, or for others, better than they need to be made for utility's sake alone,"³ then we realize that children in rural areas have many opportunities to know at first-hand some important forms of art expression. If we think of the arts as being only the study of masterpieces of painting, sculpture,

¹ Collins, Fletcher, Jr. "Cultural Resources in Rural America." *Progressive Education*, Vol. XV., No. 2. February 1938, pp. 147-151.

² Booklet: *An Exhibition of the Rural Arts*. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

³ *Ibid.*

architecture, and the like, we realize that rural children do not have ready access to them. With our present renewed realization that true art expression can be a part of everything we do, we see that the schools in rural areas have an unexcelled opportunity to stimulate awareness of beauty and to encourage children to make their surroundings truly beautiful.

2. MUSIC IS VITAL TO THE RURAL COMMUNITY

Music, as one of the cultural arts, has an important but not clearly defined place in the life of the rural community. Almost everyone enjoys music of some kind, and large numbers of people share in producing it through singing or the use of some instrument. Yet many rural communities are hungry for music in some form or other, and that need is not being fully met even by the widespread ownership and use of the radio.

Two important problems need to be faced. The one is concerned with what musical opportunity the rural community wants; the other with what musical opportunity is available to it.

What musical opportunity does the rural community want? Does it want to listen to music? If so, what music: grand opera? the greatest symphonic orchestras? our modern "swing" bands? "hill-billy" singing? folk music? hymns? Does it want to produce its own music? If so, through what medium: singing? solo instruments? ensemble groups? What kinds of music does it want to produce: classical? popular? or others? No one knows the answer for any one community, not even the people of that community. But it is certain that people want to produce as well as listen to music, and that many different kinds of music would be required to suit their needs.

What kinds of musical opportunity do rural communities have? They vary from an almost complete absence of opportunities to a well-rounded program of participation in varied musical activities. But the rural community has demonstrated its capacity for good music. Rural people have good voices and native musical talent quite as often as people in other types of communities. They like music and want it just as others do.

With music, as with the other arts, rural people have taken over the typical urban music of today so completely that they have overlooked an important musical source of their own. Just as the French, the Germans, and other European peoples have their own folk songs, so too, has rural America. Yet this music is so little known that a group of music teachers recently expressed their concern that "American music is sadly lacking in anything comparable to the folk music of foreign countries."⁴ Fletcher Collins, Jr.⁵ does not agree with them. He says: "Yet any person who knows rural people, and who can recognize an artistic song when he hears it, could in a few months' time, encounter in any rural American community from

⁴ Brogran, Whit. "Music," a report. *Progressive Education*, Vol. XIV., No. 8. December 1937, p. 643.

⁵ Op. cit., p. 147.

Maine to Texas a batch of American folk songs equally as musical as those of European communities."

Since music, as well as other forms of art, should be an expression of the life and aspirations of the people, this important phase of art expression should be rediscovered and preserved. There is danger of its being lost, for the songs and ballads which largely make up our folk music are not preserved in written form. "... once the break in transmission of these oral resources spans more than a generation, the resources disappear. In many rural communities that critical moment has arrived. Urban influences have diminished the rural expression to such an extent that the family no longer sings the old songs, and the younger generation is encouraged to cultivate a taste for Broadway hits. When the older generation passes on, this wealth of traditional songs will pass out, unless through intelligent community education, we can restore to the school children and to their parents the cultural soil in which such music thrives."⁶

It seems, clear, then, that while the people of rural America have the capacity to enjoy and participate in the musical forms common to other groups, they have an important musical contribution of their own which should not be overlooked and lost. Closely related to it, if not an integral part of it, is the folk dance. It, too, is an important part of the art expression of the people of rural America, and needs to be reclaimed from its present commercialization and debasement and restored to popular favor for its social and self-expression value.

3. BOOKS ARE NOT EASILY AVAILABLE

In another important phase of cultural opportunity, that of access to books—the printed record of man's thoughts and accomplishments, the rural community fares badly. Farm incomes are not large enough to make large personal libraries possible, or to bring some of the best magazines of general culture to the farm home. The movement to develop libraries to serve rural areas has developed wholesomely in some areas, and shows great promise for Pennsylvania. Yet at the present time people in the majority of rural communities have no library service commensurate with their needs.

The need for reading material on problems related to farming, the farm home, and the farm community is met to a very helpful extent by the United States Department of Agriculture. But if farm people are to live well-rounded lives, and not be prevented by a lack of sources of information and inspiration from developing many worthwhile interests, much more reading material of varied types and of good quality must be made available to them.

C. RURAL FACILITIES FOR HEALTH ARE INADEQUATE

Rural folks at one time prided themselves that they were healthier than city-folks, because they lived so much in the fresh air and sunshine, and had an abundance of good food. Investigation proved that

⁶ Ibid. p. 148.

they were mistaken, that the average rural child was not as healthy, in spite of fresh air and sunshine, as his city neighbor. This was due, in part, to inadequate medical care in rural areas.

Adequate medical service is still lacking throughout the country, although a number of specific groups have succeeded in changing the situation locally, and certain agencies are bringing about improved conditions in special phases of health. But medical and hospital service is very expensive in most rural communities, and cash income on farms is somewhat limited. Consequently, people do without medical service at times when it is much needed, and the general health level of the people suffers.

In spite of an abundance of food, farm diets frequently lack balance and certain vitamin-giving foods needed are not easily available in the winter. Consequently, many rural children are not well nourished. Wherever nutrition has been studied by farm women in extension clubs, or by secondary school girls in homemaking classes, this condition has been greatly improved. Nevertheless, there is still a very real problem of nutrition in many rural families.

The status of the rural community, and its relationship to the work of the school is well presented in Kolb and Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, (12) Chap. XIX, and Wofford, *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*, (20) Chap. XVI.

D. THE ONE-TEACHER SCHOOL HAS A UNIQUE FORM OF ORGANIZATION

In addition to the distinctive features that arise from the location of these schools in the rural community, there are special features of the one-teacher school which grow out of its unique form of organization. No other school today places under one teacher's care children of ages ranging from six to fourteen or fifteen years, and of school experience ranging from none to five, six, seven or eight years. Consequently, few schools have as varied groups in age, ability, or accomplishment, working together in one classroom situation. Nor are the number of children of any one age or accomplishment level as few in other types of schools as in the one-teacher school.⁷

1. THE TEACHER HAS GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, TOGETHER WITH MUCH FREEDOM

Because there is one teacher to one school, her responsibility and her freedom to initiate new undertakings are relatively high. Though she may feel held back by the complexity of the task she is trying to do and by her community's lack of readiness to accept her viewpoints, nevertheless, what she accomplishes is determined largely by her own ability to meet these problems, rather than by the stimulating or restraining influence of other teachers, or of her administrative superiors.

⁷ For a helpful discussion of the distinctive features of the one-teacher school, see Doctor Dunn's article on "Modern Education in Small Rural Schools," (5) and the introduction of Doctor Wofford's book (21).

2. THERE IS OPPORTUNITY FOR THE TEACHER TO KNOW HER
CHILDREN

Still another feature typical of the one-teacher school organization is the child's opportunity to continue to work with the same teacher for more than one school year. This is particularly significant when education is thought of as child growth and development. For it takes time to understand any child, and the teacher who has worked with a child for one year should be better able to help him than one who knows him for the first time.

One final distinguishing characteristic of the one-teacher school is frequently mentioned as perhaps its greatest handicap—the relatively small per pupil budget under the present system of school support. Under a revised system of school finance this need not be true, but where it is true it presents a challenging problem.

3. THERE ARE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES, AS WELL AS HANDICAPS

The unique form of organization of the one-teacher school is usually regarded as one of its most serious problems. Yet this may be the basis for some of its most vital opportunities, when in the hands of a teacher whose first concern is with the growth and development of every child individually and socially.

IV. OUT OF THESE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES ARISE SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS

A brief survey of the distinctive features of small rural schools immediately calls to mind a number of special opportunities or outstanding needs and limitations, or both. Sometimes our concern with limitations blinds us to rich possibilities for learning that lie just outside our doors or even within the classroom. Sometimes our eagerness and alertness in making use of these very resources prevent our seeing glaring lacks in some children's experience, which must be met if lives are to be well-balanced and complete.

Perhaps it would help if we were to list some major opportunities to be looked for in every school, and follow that with a list of the more serious limitations that should be supplied in some way. We may use these lists as self-examining devices, to see how well we know our schools, our children, and our communities.

A. WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO I SEE IN MY RURAL SCHOOL AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD?

1. WHAT OF THIS WORLD OF NATURE THAT IS SO CLOSE TO MY SCHOOL AND ITS CHILDREN?

Rainy, cloudy, or sunny skies, and beautiful sunsets; summer birds, winter birds, migratory birds, land or water birds; moths and butterflies, various species of insects; rocks, soil, and land forms; lakes, streams, and other water forms; huge sturdy trees and tiny green plants; animals with their varied activities from season to season—these are vital parts of the farm child's background.

Am I helping these children to enjoy and love the beauty of this world of nature, and to desire to keep it beautiful? Am I helping them gradually to sense that all of this has some purpose and meaning, that it is orderly and not haphazard, that man fares best when he works *with* nature and not against it?

2. WHAT OF THE EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES WHICH MAKE UP THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE FARM?

Do I see how the activities that are commonplace to these boys and girls lead naturally to interest in what other people do in other places? Do I help these children to be curious, to want to know about the things that are just beyond what they already know and understand?

Do I see how the familiarity these children have with the processes used in growing and using farm products can give them clues to understanding many processes in other industries? Do I help them use this familiar knowledge when they seek to understand the less familiar processes to which their interests lead them?

Do I appreciate the value that comes to these children from learning at first-hand how much people must depend on each other? Do I see in this the basis for further development of mutual interdependence of people, communities, and nations?

3. DO I UNDERSTAND AND USE WISELY THE ADVANTAGE THAT COMES FROM LIVING IN A CLOSELY-KNIT COMMUNITY?

Do I sense that what happens in such a community is usually more easily known and understood than what happens in complex city life? Do I help children to use the opportunities at hand to understand what governments are for and how they work? Do I see and use opportunities to understand the workings of business, and other important phases of everyday living?

4. DO I SENSE THE UNIQUE VALUES THAT LIE IN HAVING A GROUP OF CHILDREN OF VARYING AGES TOGETHER IN ONE GROUP?

Do I see that this is a more life-like situation than one in which children are all of the same mental or chronological age? Am I aware of the opportunity this gives me to help children develop consideration of others whose ability, age, size, and interests differ from their own?

5. DO I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY I HAVE TO WORK WITH THE SAME CHILDREN OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL YEARS?

Do I use this opportunity by consistently trying to discover and understand the needs and interests of each child and by planning activities to suit these needs?

6. DO I REALIZE HOW EASY IT IS, IN MY SCHOOL, TO IGNORE GRADE AND SUBJECT MATTER LINES, AND TO GIVE EACH CHILD THE EXPERIENCES HE REALLY NEEDS?

More easily than in a large graded school, I can gather together children with a common need, regardless of their age or how long they have been in school, and give them real help. I can ignore divisions into subject matter fields, and work with children on problems that are real to them, for I am their one teacher and can make sure that they lose nothing that is important from any area of experience.

7. DO I REALIZE, TOO, THAT PROMOTION CAN BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN MY SCHOOL?

Since I am to work with these children next year, I can go on with each child from where he is, and need not make the choice of sending him on to do something I know is too difficult, or sending him back to do over again with the next class what he has already done without much success.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES OF SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS

8. DO I VALUE THE RELATIVE EASE WITH WHICH I CAN USE INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION AND INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS METHODS IN CERTAIN OF THE SKILL SUBJECTS?

Since I must work with many groups and each of these groups is small, it is relatively easy for me to work with each child individually, so that there need not be failure, only differences in how rapidly children progress. Do I realize that I can select teaching materials that are particularly suited to such individual progress methods?

9. DO I USE ADVANTAGEOUSLY THE RELATIVE FREEDOM BOTH MY PUPILS AND I HAVE TO INITIATE NEW ACTIVITIES?

Do I have the pupils share with me the planning of activities to beautify our schoolroom or school grounds? Are we alert to the many things we can do or help others to do to make conditions at school and in the community more desirable?

B. WHAT NEEDS AND LIMITATIONS AM I HELPING TO MEET?

1. AM I HELPING TO GIVE THESE CHILDREN THE KIND OF EXPERIENCES WITH ART FORMS, MUSIC, LITERATURE, AND BOOKS THAT THEY NEED AND CANNOT GET ELSEWHERE?

Am I helping them find real pleasure in discovering the masterpieces that have come down to us from past generations? Am I helping them expand and clarify their standards of beauty and good taste in these various fields, so they will want to make their own surroundings beautiful wherever they are?

2. AM I HELPING THESE CHILDREN TO HAVE THE KIND OF SOCIAL EXPERIENCES THEY NEED?

Do I realize that many of these children have few close social contacts with people outside their own families and church or lodge groups, and that they feel ill at ease in situations that are new and different? Am I providing experiences that will help them know how to meet these situations with ease and satisfaction?

Do I realize that knowing how to talk with people naturally is an important aspect of social adjustment, and that many of these children have little opportunity to experience this? Am I giving them *much* opportunity to use spoken language in real, and therefore, natural situations? Am I seeing that they have an opportunity to meet people outside of their own school group so they may gain ease in meeting new people?

3. AM I HELPING TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH LEVEL OF MY CHILDREN AND THEIR COMMUNITY?

Am I making these children aware of their own health needs and helping them to establish habits that are consistent with these needs?

Am I helping these children, and through them their parents and the whole community, to be aware of conditions in the school, or in their own homes, or in the community as a whole, that are harmful to them? Am I helping them plan ways of correcting these conditions?

4. DO I RECOGNIZE THE NEED AND RIGHT OF THESE CHILDREN TO
DISCOVER MEANS OF SELF-EXPRESSION SUITED TO THEIR PAR-
TICULAR CAPACITIES?

At times children find outlets for their ideas and feelings through activities that are regular outgrowths either of farm work or the work of the farm home, or of the more conventional work of the school. The skills needed for such forms of self-expression are developed in their everyday activities in school and out. But other forms of self-expression are needed, through drawing, sketching, painting, producing music, writing poetry, and the like. Is my school giving children the skills needed to make these forms of self-expression possible?

5. HAVE I SO ARRANGED MY DAILY PROGRAM THAT I CAN GUIDE
CHILDREN'S GROWTH, RATHER THAN "HEAR" RECITATIONS?¹

The child in my school has as much time as the child in the finest graded school. My biggest problem is to plan the use of my time so that I can help him use his best. Am I satisfied that I have done this?

6. AM I USING EFFICIENTLY ALL THE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES
AVAILABLE?

There are many materials available at little cost that can be of great value to the children. Because of a limited school budget, it is especially important that I know of these possibilities and use them wisely. Have I made a systematic effort to discover what my community has to offer?

¹ See Chapter VIII of this bulletin for a detailed discussion of this problem.



1



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4

CHILDREN HELPED TO MAKE THESE SCHOOL GROUNDS BEAUTIFUL. (1) Five years ago this bank was covered with poison ivy, briars, and weeds. (2) These steps were cut through the rock garden by the boys. (3) The boys made, painted, and put up trellises. Red and white checked curtains made by the girls make the doorway attractive. (4) This cedar fence was made to protect the evergreens; the vines are morning glories.

V. RURAL TEACHERS ARE USING THEIR OPPORTUNITIES IN INTERESTING WAYS

From many sections of Pennsylvania, as well as from other parts of the country, come reports of school activities which indicate an increasing awareness of and interest in the opportunities especially available to the one- and two-teacher school, and other small schools, situated as they usually are in rural communities. Teachers are giving more and more effort to discovering the experiences which are vital in the lives of the children who attend these schools, and to planning ways to use these experiences effectively in the school-lives of the children.

A. TEACHERS VOICE THEIR CONCERN WITH CHILD DEVELOPMENT

This increasing interest in the special resources of the learning environment arises from a growing realization, shared by teachers in all types of situations, that true growth is most likely to occur when the school begins its program for each child with what that child is, and uses those experiences which already have meaning for him as a means to the achievement of new meanings and new experiences.

One teacher, in discussing the worthwhileness of certain activities carried on in her school, shows her conception of the broad purposes of the school when she says: "We realize the real opportunity for purposing, planning, self-direction, and evaluation—an opportunity for creative expression, personal initiative, experimentation, use of materials, and cooperation in group endeavor,"¹—all values in child growth. Another speaks of his concern with "gradually leading the child to enlarged thought and experiences."² Many teachers, in the selection they make of learning experiences, indicate that they seek for the children in their schools something much broader and deeper than mastery of subject matter for its own sake.

B. DISCOVERING THE BEAUTIES AND MEANING OF NATURE

Of all the many resources of the school in a rural community, the abundance of nature materials and potential nature experiences is one of the most striking. Apparently the extent to which children living in rural communities become acquainted with this world of nature varies considerably. Some children have a great interest in and considerable knowledge of the out-of-doors, while others are only very superficially informed concerning things about them. But whether their knowledge is great or little, the nature environment offers valuable experiences for children.

¹ Mrs. Sara Baker Buckley, Bucks County.

² Mr. Grantas E. Hoopert, Adams County.

That teachers realize this is indicated by two brief statements from teachers in widely separated areas of the State. One says, "In the spring and fall field trips complete our nature study classes. It is surprising to note how little rural children know of the things that are about them, and because nature plays so important a part in their lives, I feel nature study quite essential."³ The other writes, "In science, these country children showed a great fund of knowledge of birds, animals, trees, and flowers from observation. We were near the edge of the great Pymatuning Reservoir where many varieties of wild plant and animal life are found. Samples of rocks containing fossils were brought in, and since we lived in an area once covered by a glacier, much interest was shown in this phenomenon and in the soil in general."⁴

A child's interest in nature may lead the way to the development of special interests and capacities. For, as one teacher reports, ". . . it is surprising how well some little fellow you marked up a complete failure in everything, can tell you about the squirrel in his oak tree. We often discover some child's interests and know better how to interest him by having a little informal nature study."⁵

1. STUDY OF LAND AND WATER FORMS

Apparently streams, water falls, springs, caves, hills, and other land and water forms have a real interest for children. The study of them can be of real significance in helping children develop important understandings about the earth on which they live. Several teachers report activities arising from interest in one or another of the land and water forms found in their communities. For instance, one teacher mentions a visit to limestone and granite quarries, with these questions absorbing the attention of the children: How did the stone get there? How is it used? Why don't we use granite for roads? Why is the granite more expensive? Where is it used? How is it transported? What tools and machinery are used? What other building stones are there? Where are they? How are they used? How could we obtain them?⁶

Another teacher,⁷ in reporting a study of rock and soil, lists the following activities of the children: made a collection of stones found in the community; collected stones from other places; visited nearby stone quarry; learned how different kinds of stones are used and why some are more expensive than others. Studied about: elements that cause rock to become soil; kinds of soil. Made collections of soil: Many questions were asked: What has this to do with kinds of farms? What other factors determine kinds of farms? What kinds of farms are there? (This discussion led to the study of various kinds of farms.) Some of the children had relatives on different kinds of farms.)

³ Mr. George V. Dick, Adams County.

⁴ Mrs. Phyllis Van Bockern, Crawford County.

⁵ Miss Lillian Foley, Crawford County.

⁶ Mrs. Margaret Seylar, Bucks County.

⁷ Mrs. Elizabeth Van Sant, Bucks County.

2. STUDY OF WEATHER AND SKY

Probably all of us have noticed the fascination that clouds, rainbows, the moon and stars, and even thunder and lightning have for many children. We realize, too, the importance of children understanding these phenomena rather than believing mystical, fanciful tales about them. Two attempts to study the weather are suggestive of the type of activities that might be carried on. One teacher reports:

"During a month of cloud study, the children kept a wall chart, or weather chart. They took turns in observing clouds, temperature, precipitation, direction of winds, etc. These things they recorded on the chart. The thermometer was hung outside for a few minutes at 9:15 A.M. and again at 2:00 P.M. when the recordings were made. At the end of the week the average temperature for that week was computed in arithmetic class. I did not need to remind them to do this; they usually reminded me."⁸

Another teacher lists the following activities as a part of her school's study of weather: made a weather chart through the use of the thermometer; made a weather-vane; made a chart showing from which direction most of our winds came; learned what winds have to do with weather; learned the kinds of winds and their directions. Studied the effect of winds on crop selection. (Example: Farmers along Lake Erie can raise grapes in quantity because the lake wind keeps away the frost.)⁹

Teachers who have a special interest in this aspect of nature will be able to plan other activities which emphasize other phenomena of the sky and its influence on people and their activities.

3. STUDY OF ANIMAL LIFE

Interest in fish, toads, frogs, tadpoles, turtles, and eggs of different insects is reported by teachers, and learning activities growing out of these interests are described. One teacher found many possibilities for learning in the children's interest in frogs' eggs and their development. She writes:

"Some of the fifth grade boys brought frogs' eggs to school during March. Every day some of these boys put fresh water and bits of grass or pebbles into the glass bowl. The other children loved to watch the development of the tiny tadpoles. At the end of the term we had quite adult tadpoles. The children and I obtained our information regarding frogs from the following sources: World Book, Lincoln Library, science textbooks, and stories in reading class. They were deeply interested in the frog's protective coloring which they found discussed in my National Geographic Magazines. They are fond of drawing and need no urging to make drawings of most objects of interest. We read about other phases of frog life from a

⁸ Miss Evelyn Koch, Union County.

⁹ Mrs. Van Sant, Op. cit.

farm paper. This told of frog raising as a profitable business. One of the boys was quite well informed."¹⁰

At least one group of children had more than a passing interest in birds, and studied to find out such things as these about them: What is the difference between birds who live on the ground and those who fly? Why do birds migrate? How do they get their food? What is the difference between nocturnal and carnivorous birds? Why do birds have different shaped bills? What good do they do us?¹¹

Another nature study interest is reported by one teacher¹² in some detail:

"Last fall we carried out a successful unit based on the monarch butterfly. To motivate this work I placed at the disposal of the pupils both pictures and specimens of all three stages of the monarch butterfly which I have in my collections. I also called the attention of the pupils to the copper-red colored butterfly as it drifted about in its lazy-leisurely manner over the playground at noon.

"It was not long until one boy brought a monarch larva into the schoolroom and asked if he might keep it there for observation. Of course I welcomed the opportunity and offered a jar to keep it in. Within a few days two more larvæ were brought in. Other pupils kept larvæ at home; one had two, another three.

"It was now time to begin our study of the monarch larva or caterpillar as it is sometimes called. We observed its conspicuous coloring—nature's way of telling birds that this larva is distasteful. The whip-like organs at either end of the body were noted and it was found that these were used only when the animal was disturbed. We found that the monarch larva would eat nothing but milkweed leaves and thereby gets its name 'milkweed butterfly.'

"In a few days the caterpillar crawled to the top of the jar and fastened a number of silk threads. To this it built a short, black, silken knob. With a few rhythmic movements this 'ugly worm' changed into nature's most beautiful living jewel—a translucent jade green body held together with gold brads. As the days passed the chrysalis became darker and darker in color and by the fourteenth day the spots and veins of the wings could be seen through the case.

"One afternoon at recess time one of the children exclaimed, 'It is out!' and pointed to the nature-study table. An adult monarch had come out and was feebly waving its wings in the air to get them dry and to strengthen its muscles for flight. It was soon to be turned out to join its comrades in a migration to a land farther south because the only food of its larvæ, the milkweed plant, had been killed by frost."

4. STUDY OF PLANT LIFE

Several teachers report study of wild flowers through a variety of school and out of school activities. Among experiences mentioned

¹⁰ Miss Koch, Op. cit.

¹¹ Reported by Mrs. Buckley, Op. cit.

¹² Mr. Byron Ashbaugh, Venango County.

are: walks to study flowers, making pressed wildflower booklets, making weed seed charts, learning how plants scatter their seeds, identifying flowers with the help of parents, teacher, and a flower guide, getting all possible information about the flowers they identified, and drawing pictures of the flowers.¹³ Another interesting lead from such a study is suggested by one teacher,¹⁴ when she says, "The harmfulness and good qualities of the flowers were discussed, for sometimes the pupils collected herbs (wild flowers) that the good old Pennsylvania Dutch used for tea in days gone by."

Similar studies of trees are reported by several teachers.¹⁵ In one instance this study centers around trees which have been planted in the school yard. In writing of it, the teacher¹⁶ says:

"The large trees of maple and beech were planted long ago, but I felt we should have a variety of trees, and over the period of five years that I have taught here we have brought some interesting trees into the locality and planted them. Two of them, the swamp balsam and the mountain ash, are rare in our locality and the children take special pride in them for that reason. The children have always been interested in the pussy willow, so we planted several bushes of it in our flower garden. Through the school flower garden I feel the children have developed a keener enjoyment of flowers, for they like to exchange seeds, plants, and bulbs with me."

Closely allied with children's interest in studying flowers and trees is their interest in developing their own school grounds to make them more attractive. In at least two schools,¹⁷ this interest has found expression in the development of rock gardens. The questions considered by children in planning their garden will help to indicate the possibilities for learning such experiences offer. In one school these are the major questions asked:

"Why shall it be a rock garden? Is the soil good? Will things grow? Which plants will be best? Why? What color combinations shall we use? Why? How about the height of the various plants? Where shall we get enough perennials? How will we keep the weeds down during the four months vacation? Won't it be fun to have beautiful flower beds and our own cut flowers in September? Why are Mrs. J.'s flowers more perfect than ours? (Asters sent to school by Mrs. J. were more beautiful than ours.) How can we improve ours next year?"¹⁸

As a result of this activity community cooperation developed. All parents donated something to the garden and many came to help and to see what was being done. It was agreed that the children should meet to clean the flower beds once a month. Seventeen pupils and three secondary school pupils helped in May. Civic pride was most

¹³ Teachers reporting such activities are Miss Zoe Bashline, Clarion County, Miss Clara E. Frankhauser, Berks County, and Mrs. Van Sant.

¹⁴ Miss Bashline, *Op. cit.*

¹⁵ Miss Bashline, Mrs. Van Sant, and Mr. Milton Landis, Lycoming County.

¹⁶ Mr. Landis, *Op. cit.*

¹⁷ Those taught by Mrs. Seylar and Mrs. Van Sant.

¹⁸ This report comes from Mrs. Seylar, *Op. cit.* A somewhat similar set of questions, though with many differences, was reported by Mrs. Buckley, *Op. cit.*

evident. That interest in the flower garden was very genuine to the children in the school is indicated in a report of the activity written by one of the sixth grade children. It is quoted here in full:

OUR FLOWERS

"Last year we made a rock garden. Every pupil helped make it. We all brought flowers to plant, such as iris, chrysanthemums, hollyhocks, Japanese lanterns, and many others. Our rock garden is shaped like an L and is about forty feet long and ten feet wide. It is made on an old bank that never looked nice before. The boys made steps through the rock garden at two places.

"This year when we came back to school our rock garden surely looked nice. Those pupils that lived near the school met during the summer and pulled the weeds. The asters and nasturtiums were blooming all over the place.

"In back of the schoolhouse we have a wild flower garden. We put cedar trees, mountain laurel, rhododendron, and other trees from the woods in it. Under the trees we planted spring beauties, violets, lady slippers, trailing arbutus, and other flowers. We got most of these flowers one sunny day when we all went to the woods. We had to be very careful when we transplanted them.

"On the two fence lines that separate the schoolground from Mr. Moody's field we have lilacs. I wish you could see how nice they look when they bloom. Every lilac that we planted is growing very nicely.

"We have rambler roses planted at the toilets, at the woodshed, and on the trellises by the door. The boys made the trellises. All of the people that come to our school say that they are very nice.

"On the south and east sides of the school we have fourteen evergreens planted. Mr. Rosenberry gave them to us. That was very nice of him. Then all around the trees we have a low fence made of cedar poles. Mr. Weisenbacher gave us the poles, Mr. Hill brought them to school, and the boys made the fence. This is to keep people from getting too close to our trees, and it looks nice, too. We planted morning-glories at each post and they have climbed up and run along the top of the fence and they are very nice.

"On each side of the driveway we have two forsythia bushes with evergreen trees between them. Big stones hold up the ground and keep people from driving on them.

"Our big bank is a pretty sight. It is a steep, three-cornered bank which covers almost a quarter of an acre. We have planted rambler roses and forsythia bushes all over it. We all came out to see the roses this summer. Mrs. Seylar took some pictures of them.

"We have some flowers in our school. As long as there are cut flowers we always have the room full of them. Mrs. Seylar showed us how to fix them in the vases so that they look nice. Then we always bring plants to school and plant them in our window boxes that Mr. Seylar made for us. We plant vines in hanging baskets and put other flowers in flower pots. This makes our schoolroom very attractive."¹⁹

Other schools make use of plants and flowers that can be kept indoors throughout the year. The report of one teacher indicates a value other than the beauty and the knowledge of living things they offer. She writes:

"We had in the room many different kinds of plants that were brought to school by the pupils and myself. We discussed the value of the plants in the room, and the care of plants in general; then we took plants belonging to one family and discussed the particular care and needs of each plant in order to have it flourish and be attractive. We had about twenty different species. We had thirty-five plants in the room all winter. There wasn't one day throughout the term that we didn't have a few blooming. The children . . . wanted plants for home, both girls and boys. My most difficult task was to provide them with cuttings and teach them how to care for them at home.

"These plants also helped me in getting mothers to school and to be more friendly toward the school and myself. I have a number of plants at home that I received from mothers as long as seven years ago."²⁰

Many other nature study experiences might be noted, for, as one teacher who has a keen interest in nature study possibilities for rural children writes: "The study of nature is a study that never ends; it extends from the cubic foot of earth on which you stand in the woods to the limits of the universe. Maybe this cubic foot of earth contains a bumble bee's nest or an ant's nest. Men have given their whole lives to the study of the ant alone. The stars, on the other hand, have held the fascination of men ever since the beginning of time."²¹

C. ACTIVITIES OF THE FARM AND HOME HAVE SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE SCHOOL

"We rural teachers have some fine opportunities for using home experiences as starting points for learning activities. One which is always of great interest and in which many interesting discoveries will be made is to start with the dairying industry on the farm, and follow it on through the different uses made of the milk, such as in the cheese, butter, condensed milk, dry milk, and ice cream industries. If any of these industries should be located in the community, or near the school, it will stimulate interest to visit its factory. The

¹⁹ Frances Sawka, who at the time she wrote this was in the sixth grade of the Franklin School, Springfield Township, Bucks County.

²⁰ Miss Eva Hornberger, Northumberland County.

²¹ Mr. Ashbaugh, Op. cit.

leather industry will also work in nicely. Some very fine materials on the leather industry can be obtained for the asking, from leather companies. The meat packing industry will follow along naturally with the others.

"This is an activity that will correlate well in practically all school subjects. . . ." ²²

1. SCHOOL FAIRS AND FARM PRODUCTS SHOWS

Pet shows and fairs of one type or another are reported as valuable rural school experiences. A good example of this type of activity and its possible outcomes is reported briefly by the teacher. It was called a farm products show, and evidently had values extending beyond the schoolroom and school age children. The teacher²³ lists the following information concerning it:

"Origin of idea: a. Interest in the local Grange Fair; b. My interest in the children's gardens.

Procedure: a. Appointment of committees: flower, fruit, vegetable, awards, program; b. Talking up the show and advertising; c. Correlation of school subjects. (Details are omitted here.)

Outcomes: Good attendance, interest, practical advice, practice in judging, development of community spirit.

Special Outcomes: A collection of seeds was made, bottled, and labeled. The county farm agent was asked to speak on 'pests.' The children gathered harmful worms, bugs, etc., in jars supplied with proper food. The farm agent explained, gave formulas to parents, etc. One new valley pest was found."

Another somewhat similar activity was carried on as a September Fair. "This project was to interest the parents in school work and to interest the children in their own farms. Children brought all types of fruits, vegetables, pastry, handiwork, and canned goods. We made prizes out of different color construction paper and pins. Children judged the best from each group and awarded the prizes. They learned to classify fruits and vegetables, and how to judge, using quality instead of quantity as a basis." ²⁴

2. SOURCES OF FOOD IN THE COMMUNITY

One teacher writes: "'Sources of Food in Our Community' is an interesting unit of work which may be carried out by the class as a whole, or by groups of children working on assigned parts. This work, especially, affords interest to the children when they actually display the food products at school and each is used in such a way for school lunch that the children can see the benefit and feel the need for the food." ²⁵

The study, as carried out in this school, included animals, fish, plants, and trees as sources of food.

²² Miss Foley, Op. cit.

²³ Mrs. Louisa C. Cornelius, Huntingdon County.

²⁴ Miss Frankhauser, Op. cit.

²⁵ Miss Ida M. Woolton, Susquehanna County.

D. THE RURAL COMMUNITY FURNISHES INTERESTING LEADS AND HELPFUL RESOURCES

In addition to the agricultural activities of the farm community, there are many other potentially valuable experiences for children. Some of these have to do with the institutions that have become established in the community; these, on the whole, are simpler and easier to understand than similar institutions elsewhere. Others have to do with the industries and occupations of the community in addition to farming. Still others deal with the history and backgrounds of the community. And there are organizations and agencies in nearly every community which can be of help to the school in solving its many problems.

1. THE COMMUNITY OFFERS OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION AND EXTENDED KNOWLEDGE

Government activities as they are observed in the local school district, the township, the county, and the State, have been the subjects of vital study by children in some small rural schools. One very interesting report of such a study is contained in Volume IV, Number 4, of the *Franklin Review*.²⁶ The article is entitled, "Springfield Township Is Our Home," and was the work of children in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Because it is too long to be reproduced here, an outline of the topics considered, and a few brief quotations are given.

- a. History of Springfield Township. "Have you ever stopped to think that at one time Indians lived on this land which is now ours? Many boys and girls have picked up old arrow heads, clay dishes, tomahawks, and other Indian relics from our fields and woods. This is proof that the Indians lived here. . . ."
- b. The Villages of Springfield Township.
- c. The Management of Our Township. "We all know that our nation is divided into states; the states into counties; and the counties into cities, boroughs, or townships. We live in a township and I am sure that you would like to know just how we manage our township. We will soon be the ones to have charge of these things, so we should know all about it."
- d. Roads of Springfield
- e. Occupations of our people
- f. Hunting, fishing, trapping
- g. Population
- h. Transportation
- i. Churches of Springfield Township
- j. Amusements. ". . . Did anyone say that there was nothing to do in Springfield Township? Tell him there's plenty to do, and he is to join in and share in the fun."

²⁶ Published four times a year by the Franklin School, Mrs. Seylar, teacher.

- k. Farm conveniences and improvements since my grandfather's time. "My great-grandfather's family lived in the kitchen in the winter time because it was the only room which had a stove. The bedrooms were typical ice boxes. Today most of our homes have a central heating system of some kind, and the entire house is comfortable. They did not have much furniture, and what they had was not nearly as nice as ours. They used candles or coal-oil lamps. Most of us have electric lights and other conveniences . . . I think that we are very fortunate to live at the present time. I am glad that I am a boy now. Don't you think that I'm right?"
- l. Springfield High School
- m. Grade Schools. ". . . All schools have done some planting and most of the school grounds are very attractive, although not level. Keystone and Franklin Schools have radios. Several schools have hot lunches."

The county or local fair is an established part of the life of many communities. Not only have schools been interested in conducting their own fairs, as reported earlier in this chapter; some schools have studied the fair itself, in an effort to understand its importance to the community and its possible value to the children who attend it.²⁷

Another established institution that must have challenged the interest of every child who has lived in a rural community is the country auction. One rural teacher,²⁸ recognizing the great interest it held for children in her school, decided to do something about it. She outlines what she and the children did thus:

"Origin of idea: All the farmers attended these sales. The children were tempted to miss school to go. We decided to have one at home.

Procedure: a. Gathering things together (or their pictures). b. Appointing 'sale crier,' 'clerk,' and 'assistant.' c. Making paper money, checks, notes, etc. d. The sale (everyone bidding and buying). e. Settling up. Methods: cash, check, notes with bail, discounting notes at bank, collection of notes by bank.

Outcomes: Desire satisfied. Practical experience (excellent arithmetic device)."

2. MANY WORK ACTIVITIES ARE GOING ON IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE INTERESTED

Widely varied types of work activities can be observed in various parts of the State. One teacher²⁹ reports a visit to the grist mills. Another³⁰ tells of a visit to the brickworks. Another has found many

²⁷ Mrs. Buckley reports such a study.

²⁸ Mrs. Cornelius, *Op. cit.*

²⁹ Mrs. Laura Higgins, Adams County.

³⁰ Miss Frankhauser, *Op. cit.*

problems of interest to children in a study of the gas wells of the community. The scope of information and interest that could arise from this last study is suggested by a sketchy summary of questions and topics considered:

"Is gas a mineral? Where is it found? Why are some wells dry? (Discussion—private gas wells and company owned ones; workmanship; machinery used.) What benefits are derived from wells that are in our community? How is the gas used? Is it expensive? What is royalty? A well was drilled on our school ground. Why was it necessary? Machines used for drilling. Number of workmen needed. Depth of the well. Are all wells the same depth? Cost per foot. Why must the water be tested? Who tests it? Kind of water in different wells. Different minerals found in water.

"What causes a white slush at a certain depth of the well? Improvement of pumps that are now used. Where to locate a well. (Children observed the different steps during the drilling of our well. Questions asked by children were answered by drillers who were experienced.) Where the drill was made. How the coal industry of our community has probably been responsible for the need of this drill. What caused a delay in the work of this well? Why was a tractor engine used to run the drill?"³¹

People engaged in various types of work activities offer special services to the school at times. This fact is well illustrated by a report from a rural teacher in Lycoming County. She writes:

"During the past spring, when we studied about herbs, we were assisted by many persons throughout the community who searched for and brought or sent to us numerous specimens for study and mounting. Early in February we began a flower project, with the thought in mind of our summer projects and our Junior Fair to be held in September. With the help and cooperation of our local florist and our county vocational supervisor, and with the financial aid of our parent-teacher association and some friends, the children were given lessons in preparing soil, planting seeds, transplanting plants, and caring for them. Each pupil made or had help in making a box averaging twelve by fourteen inches, into which he transplanted his plants from the flats. In all, one hundred fifty dozen plants were transplanted. A few of these were tomato plants; the majority were flowers: marigolds, asters, zinnias, snapdragons, larkspur, and cornflowers."³²

3. EVERY COMMUNITY HAS AN INTERESTING HISTORY

Interest in Indians, especially when there is evidence that they have lived in our local communities at one time, seems to be great, for many teachers report activities centering in one phase or another of their lives.³³ One particularly suggestive report is included here:

³¹ Mrs. Rachel B. Austin, Fayette County.

³² Miss Esther Love, Lycoming County.

³³ Such reports are on file from Mrs. Austin, Miss Frankhauser, Miss Koch, and Mrs. Seylar.

"We made a special study of Indian lore in this section of Union County. The children found out that White Deer was founded in 1776, and that Widow Smith's mill made rifles for use in the Revolutionary War. This mill was burned twice by the Indians, but was rebuilt each time. However, in 1929 it burned unexpectedly and has never been rebuilt. The children have collected the following Indian relics which we used in an exhibit: pestles, arrow-heads, spears, skinning knives, corn grinders, and one moccasins or shoelast . . . The Indian tool-makers must have dwelt here long ago, because the surrounding communities abound in Indian relics."³⁴

Another quite different use of historical backgrounds was made by a teacher in another part of the State. She writes: "Using home backgrounds as a beginning for the study of European geography, we found that in our group were children whose parents came from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Italy, France, and Germany. Most of the children spoke and wrote the native language for us and brought pictures, keepsakes, and first-hand information on conditions in these countries at the present time."³⁵

One group of children spent considerable time and gained a great deal of understanding and satisfaction in writing a history of their valley. The teacher,³⁶ in telling about it, says that the idea originated in the finding of potter's clay and Indian arrowheads, in a study of local industries, and in conversation concerning old Indian legends. The study and writing were carried on by the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of the school, and involved much discussion, talks with old inhabitants, use of old county history books for research, reading of Indian lore and stories of pioneer life, and the planning, preparing, and assembling of the book. In addition, the material was used to build a pageant celebrating the County Centennial at a Home-Coming on the last day of school.

Something of the nature of the book is indicated by two quotations, the first a poem inserted after the dedication page, the other the preface written and signed by the children.

"INDIAN CHILDREN

"Where we walk to school today
Indian children used to play,
All about our native land
Where the shops and houses stand.

And the trees were very tall,
And there were no streets at all,
Not a church and not a steeple,
Only woods and Indian people.

Only wigwams on the ground,
And at night bears prowling round.
What a different place today,
Where we live, and work, and play!"

³⁴ Miss Koch, Op. cit.

³⁵ Mrs. Van Bockern, Op. cit.

³⁶ Mrs. Cornelius, Op. cit.

"PREFACE

"This is the story of Smith Valley. Each chapter tells a story.

"We wrote the book to answer our question, 'What has happened in our valley from the time Columbus discovered America until today?'

"We have made our stories from what people told us and from old histories. We decided to draw our pictures freehand instead of tracing them."

The suggestion in this preface that people may be the sources of much information about the history of the community is borne out by the experience of others. The contribution of such a person to the work of one school is indicated in a brief report sent by the teacher:³⁷

"We have an elderly patron in our district who has always interested himself in the early settlement of this particular part of our State. He has collected names, dates, and interesting bits of historical data about his locality and his neighbors. We invited this gentleman into our school to tell us about the things he had found out. He was able to give us the names of the very first settlers in the valley, where the first farm building and first school stood, where the first grist and saw mill was located, and he even delighted the children by telling them several stories, true ones, about narrow escapes from Indian attacks, and several brave rides through the valley to save other settlers.

"The children were delighted to know that several of our own pupils had grandfathers who figured in these tales. An old atlas of Pennsylvania, dated 1870, was produced by another patron to prove the worth of Mr. Shaner's information."

4. OTHER COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES FURNISH OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

The great network of improved highways which cross the State and the entire country furnishes a number of leads for alert children and teachers. The opportunity to learn how to be safe on them is quite as great as the need. The processes of road building are in themselves interesting to many children. Then, too, many roads lead on to other and different parts of the country, and can serve as points of departure for interesting imaginative travel.

Two school activities growing out of interest in the highways and the problems they present are suggested here. One is reported in the school magazine by a fourth grade child, and is of interest, not because it is unique, but because of the evidence it gives that the experience is real and vital to the children who are taking part in it. The article follows:³⁸

³⁷ Mrs. A. C. Boudeman, Lycoming County.

³⁸ Written by Diane Geissinger, Franklin School, Bucks County.

"OUR SAFETY PATROL

"We have a Safety Patrol. This is to help the children get to and from school every day. We don't want anyone to get hurt on the road.

"Two men came to school one day and showed us two moving pictures about safety.

"Everybody on the Safety Patrol has a special duty. There are eight patrolmen and a captain. The State patrolman from Doylestown watches our safety patrolmen at work sometimes.

"Helen is Captain. My work is at the store. I must see that the children cross the street safely and get on the bus. Donald is at the Springtown schoolhouse. Susie is at the bridge. Stewart is at Melchior's corner. Marjorie tells us when to cross the road at school to get on the bus. We must cross six at a time and walk single file. Joyce is at the steps and tells us when to go up to the road. Joseph and Fred hold 'Caution' signs above and below the bus to warn the cars. John is in charge on Mr. Hill's bus. Helen takes care of the pupils that walk.

"We do not stop the cars. We keep the children away from the cars so they won't be hurt."

The other activity is reported by the teacher³⁹ and involves many learning experiences growing out of a study of the Lincoln Highway, which passes through the community in which the school is located. It was organized as a unit study, with two major purposes: to teach United States geography so as to relate it to the children's environment; and to teach life and industry in different sections of the United States.

Different aspects of the study were carried on in arithmetic, English, history, spelling, and art periods, so that it permeated much of the work of these children during the time it was in progress. The general plan of the study, after first getting a picture of the highway as a whole, was to find out as much as possible about chief cities through which the highway passed and about the countryside and its industries. The following outcomes of the unit are listed:

A new and vital interest in the geography of our State and Nation.

A keen desire for further knowledge.

State and national pride.

A feeling that "geography is fun."

Interested parents.

Still other possible interests of children in small rural schools are suggested by news items from a supplement to the spring issue of the *Franklin Review*. They are quoted verbatim:

"What do you know about the historic 'Dog Wood Trail' that crosses our county? It is important. Ask any pupil from our school about it."

³⁹ Mrs. Inez V. Bridge, Adams County.

"Are you going to the Doylestown Centennial Celebration this week? Every Bucks County citizen should go. There will be something worthwhile every day. It is one hundred years since our county seat became a borough, although there were settlers there more than two hundred years ago."

E. THE SIZE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ONE- AND TWO-TEACHER SCHOOLS PRESENT SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Typically, the one-teacher school has children ranging in age from six to fourteen or fifteen; it has few children at any one grade level in school, and it has several grades. The two-teacher school also has a wide range of age and grade levels. Alert teachers have come to realize that this is an opportunity as well as a difficulty, for certain very desirable types of school activities can be carried on to advantage in such a setup.

There is often a distinct advantage, both to the teacher and to the children themselves, in having groups composed of children of varied ages work together on activities of common interest. Not only can more mature types of work be carried on by the older children, but all of them are given much needed experience in working with others who differ in their levels of ability. This type of activity is illustrated in many of those already reported in this chapter.

Teachers sometimes find, also, that a vital type of work can be carried on by older children in preparing and planning materials for the use of younger ones. Sometimes this takes the form of preparation of out-of-class activities of a drill type, including games, cards, and charts, as reported by a number of teachers,⁴⁰ on the level of younger readers, when the entire group is working with the same general topic, and easy materials on the subject are not available. At times, too, it may take the form of direct guidance of younger children's work by capable older children.

1. INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES ARE CARRIED ON

There is an increasing tendency for teachers in schools having several grades and few children in each grade to plan learning activities in the skill fields on the basis of individual need. In many counties testing programs are carried on as an aid to the diagnosis of individual needs and possibilities. Most important to a program of individual instruction is the use that is made of the findings of these tests. One teacher⁴¹ writes:

"After the tests have been checked I go over them carefully, making note of each pupil's difficulties in the different subjects tested. If a pupil is well up to his grade level or above it, I do not give much attention to the subjects in which he has scored high.

⁴⁰ Such materials are described by Mrs. Bridge, Op. cit.

⁴¹ Miss Foley, Op. cit.

I then make a chart with the pupils' names along the sides, the names of subjects along the top, and space enough to make little notes of what each child needs in each subject . . . When a difficulty is overcome it is crossed off the chart."

Another effort to make children conscious of their own needs, as well as of the progress they are making, is through the use of guidance folders. A child's reaction to them is given in this account, written by a pupil in the sixth grade:⁴²

"In our school each pupil has a folder made out of stiff cardboard. We write our autobiographies and put them in the folders. Each year we add a new chapter to our autobiographies. We put our test papers and all papers that our parents have signed in the folders.

"We always try to do good work. We don't like to save poor papers. It is fun to take your folder and look at a paper that you did in September and put it beside one that you did in April and see the difference in penmanship.

"Mr. Geissinger likes to look at our folders when he comes to school. Our parents look at them when they come, too.

"These folders help us a lot and it is fun to keep them."

F. TEACHERS AND PUPILS INITIATE WORTHWHILE ACTIVITIES

A surprising number of opportunities for valuable experiences arise from time to time, and the alert teacher makes use of them in ways best suited to the needs and abilities of her children. Following are listed briefly a number of particular situations that were used effectively by rural schools in various parts of the State:

1. STUDY OF TOWNSHIP ROADS DEVELOPED FROM COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS

A discussion of the complaints made about the roads led to such questions as these: Why are the roads poor? Who is responsible? What are the duties of a road supervisor? How does he get his position? Whom is he working for? Who pays him? What is a tax?⁴³

2. THE FLOOD OF 1936 LED TO SEVERAL INTERESTING STUDIES

In one school in the flood area such questions and topics as these were studied by the children: Number of states affected, damage done in local community, comparison of damage done in the community with that of the more stricken areas. Was the 1936 Johnstown flood caused in the same way as the one studied in history? How could we help the people of the stricken areas? How was our

⁴² Frances Sawka, Franklin School, Bucks County.

⁴³ Reported by Mrs. Seylar, Op. cit.

Government taking steps to aid the different areas at once; Government plans for further prevention of such disasters; etc.⁴⁴

In another school the questions were generally the same, though the immediate approach was slightly different. Following are the questions the teacher⁴⁵ reports: What damage was done at your home? Did you see the river (Delaware)? Why was the Riegelsville bridge washed down? What causes floods like this? Could they be prevented? What damage was done in other parts of the country? Were we fortunate? What can we do for those who are suffering? What is our Government doing about it? What are the people of our community doing? What is your opinion?

3. HIGHWAYS STIMULATE SPECIAL STUDIES

In one situation a seventh grade boy was injured by rushing into the highway backwards. He was absent six weeks, and a court trial was involved, with the teacher absent three days from school to serve as a witness, and several older boys called as witnesses. The teacher lists these questions as growing out of the incident: Who caused the accident? Was anything gained? What was lost? How could it have been prevented? What other accidents could happen through our carelessness? Why did it 'go to court'? (This was understood because of a previous visit to and study of the local court.)⁴⁵

In the same school the pupils became very much interested in the new State highway that was built past the school. Attention was given to: Who pays for it? How do they get the money? Why do the surveyors come first? Why is the course changed? Why do they lay rocks, then coarse stones, then fine? What is macadam? What laws apply to traffic on this road? Why are they necessary? What tools do the men use? (The huge steam shovel was especially fascinating.) How does this road connect us with more important cities?

4. STRAY KITTENS LEAD CHILDREN TO A STUDY OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY

"One cold day five stray kittens were found abandoned on the road. They were brought into the schoolroom, given warm milk, and their future decided upon. Homes for two were found, and the S. P. C. A. came in answer to our call—assuring us that they had only recently had inquiries for kittens."⁴⁶ This situation led to a study of the treatment of animals, and to the establishment of a "kindness to animals club," which functioned regularly.

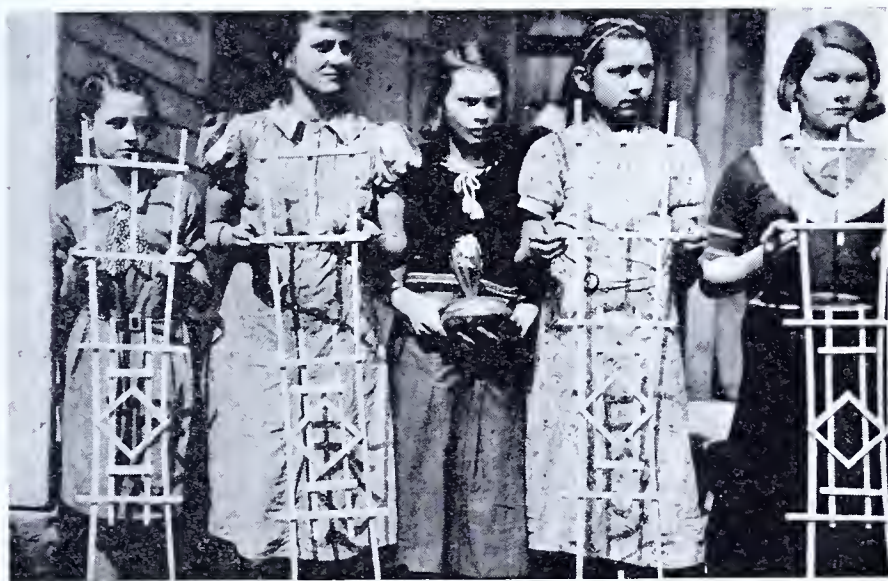
These varied instances of things not planned, but arising in a vital way in the experience of the children, suggest possibilities that may be worth considering, if a teacher is concerned with the widest possible development of the children under her care.

⁴⁴ Reported by Mrs. Austin, Op. cit.

⁴⁵ Mrs. Seylar, Op. cit.

⁴⁶ Mrs. Buckley, Op. cit.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES OF SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS



THESE CHILDREN LIKE TO WORK WITH TOOLS. In the upper picture they are shown using two toboggans which they have made. Below the girls exhibit trellises they have made.

VI. RURAL TEACHERS ARE FINDING HELPFUL WAYS TO MEET IMPORTANT NEEDS

Closely related to the work that is being done in the discovery and use of opportunities peculiar to the small rural schools is the attention given to the special needs and limitations of children in these schools. It is realized that some important phases of our cultural development may not be easily available to these children in their homes and in community life in general; hence the schools are trying to supply them wherever they can. Many ways of supplying such lacks are reported.

A. VARIED EXPERIENCES WITH THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ARE PROVIDED

No longer are the school experiences of children limited to the useful in the utilitarian sense. The arts, music, literature, and books as sources of knowledge and information, are regarded as the right of every child. The broad heritage of the past, as it relates to the present interests and abilities of children, is recognized to be essential for the fullest development of the child.

1. ART BECOMES A PART OF DAILY LIVING

One of the most vital art problems to children in school is that of making their own surroundings attractive. Many teachers are aware of the need to have the schoolroom homelike and pleasing in appearance. Others see that making it so is an experience through which children can grow desirably. In writing of the experiences of her children in improving the physical surroundings of a rural school, one teacher reports as follows:

"The teacher must have an appreciation for beauty and must strive to develop in the children the attitude of mind known as appreciation . . .

"How can we arrange the room more attractively? Who would like to paint chairs? sand table? bookshelves? What choice and harmony of colors shall we use? Would you like a reading corner? a rug? Where shall the radio be placed? . . .

"As children become aware of the harmony and coziness which envelop them, they no longer sit idly by, but become enthusiastic planners and doers. During the noon hour a committee is making a window shelf for our plants and pottery. Still others may be making a window box to be placed outside later. Curtains are being hemmed, mirrors shined, plants watered. Each group has its particular activity, cooperating and working, not for individual gain but for the achieving of a cheerful school atmosphere. It is hoped, too, that this interest stimulated in the child will be carried over to his home, making it more cheerful and attractive."¹

¹ Mrs. Sara Baker Buckley, Bucks County.

Another teacher² writes: "Keeping the room decorated seasonably and tastefully kept us busy in art periods and what extra time we could get. Usually there would be a list of free art work on the board for spare time. The children liked this and did some good work."

Another effort to make the room attractive to the children involved attention to the pictures in the room. "Interesting arrangement of pictures helps to make a room attractive. We had some framed pictures that were quite old and soiled, so we took out the old pictures, cleaned the glass and frames, and framed the pictures we were studying. These pictures were changed from time to time."³

Still another teacher reports giving attention to the problem of building a stage setting for use in presenting plays.⁴ Another tells of a variety of practical activities carried on as a part of the art work of the school. "January, February, March, April—these months were spent by seventh grade boys in making coat hangers. Kitchen sets were made by the sixth and seventh grade girls. These were made by collecting tin cans. These were enameled, each girl using the color scheme found in her kitchen at home. Designs were stenciled on the cans and colored . . . Each girl worked out her own design . . ."⁵

Another illustration of the application of art to problems of everyday living is reported. "At all times throughout the year children bring into school problems about home. Decorating a girl's bedroom, selecting pictures suitable for different rooms, suggestions for gifts, how and what to serve at different kinds of parties, making decorations for different seasons, were among the problems considered."⁶

Children come to have a real sense of the value of beauty in their surroundings. One of them⁷ describes "The Pretty Corner" in their schoolroom:

"The third grade made a pretty corner. It is a table made of four crates. Kenneth and I brought the crates. Mrs. Seylar brought a pretty blue table cloth. I brought my book ends and we all brought books for the corner.

"We have a copper bowl in the center. There is a flower plant in it. We have a fish bowl on our table. There are three fish. We named them 'Mixie' (He's speckled), 'Teeny' (He's so small), and 'Sunny' (He is so bright and yellow.) We tend the fish. They have shells, plants, and colored shells in their bowl.

"Kenneth's mother made us a pretty doily for our pretty corner. It has flowers on it and says 'My Friends.'

² Mrs. Phyllis Van Bockern, Crawford County.

³ Mrs. Edna C. Long of Union County. A somewhat similar report is available from Miss Zoe Bashline, Clarion County.

⁴ Mr. Milton Landis, Lycoming County.

⁵ Mrs. Florence Yaw, Lycoming County.

⁶ Miss Eva Hornberger, Northumberland County.

⁷ Janet Fabian, Franklin School, Bucks County.

"We made a 'Food Friends' book in health class and we have it in our corner.

"The third grade sits in this corner to study and to eat lunch."

2. EXPERIENCES WITH MUSIC ARE REGARDED AS THE RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD

The number of supervisors of music working in small rural schools has increased rapidly in the past few years. Teachers without the aid of special supervisors are also doing much to provide worthwhile music experiences. This includes appreciation type activities as well as experiences in singing and in playing simple instruments.

One teacher⁸ who has a special interest in music has found it possible to make an important contribution, not only to the lives of the children, but also to the entire community. He says: "I have conducted several school orchestras in the township in the last eleven years. This is a school activity which I am positive has been a help in the children's home life. Several of the larger families have their own little family orchestras. These young musicians belong to our Grange and their music is a great help . . . Children with a little help learn to play instruments easily. The practice is done mostly during recess and at noon, with an evening session occasionally."

3. ABUNDANT EXPERIENCE WITH LITERATURE AND WITH BOOKS IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL

The number of schools that are searching for some way to make accessible to children more and better books is clear evidence of the need for them. Several teachers write of their libraries and of the ways in which they have been supplied. One says: "The library is taken care of by the children. We place a table near the library shelves and make an attractive, well lighted library corner. Daily papers for which I subscribe are placed in the library, as well as magazines, booklets, and all types of interesting reading."⁹ Another says: "The librarian, who is usually an older boy or girl, keeps the books on the proper shelves, and takes care of all signing in or out of books. Partly through the help of the county library, we have over a hundred books to use each year."¹⁰

One school,¹¹ in facing the problem of how to get good books, used a rummage sale as a device. Committees made arrangements to collect articles, planned for a place to hold the sale, and performed other necessary work in preparation for it. After the rummage sale was over "thank you" notes were written to people who had helped, a treasurer was elected to take care of funds, committees wrote for book lists, and the secretary ordered books which were selected to suit various ages. Hence these children had a practical

⁸ Mr. Landis, Op. cit.

⁹ Mr. Grantas E. Hoopert, Adams County.

¹⁰ Mrs. Mary Jerauld, Susquehanna County.

¹¹ Mrs. Buckley, Op. cit.

basis for valuing their books, in addition to the pleasure and enrichment which came later through their opportunity to read the books.

In another school the problem was met differently, as the teacher reports: "At the beginning of the year we organized a club which the children named 'The Young People's Thrift Club.' Dues were voluntary, since some simply could not afford any expense. Those who had spending money frequently put their candy money into the treasury of their own accord. No one ever mentioned, or ever thought, I believe, that it was unfair for some not to put in dues, but seemed glad to help. The children loved their library, which was already quite extensive compared to most rural schools. From an approved list the children selected the books they wished me to purchase with their club money. Thus a nice number of new books were added to the library and several were donated by parents and the teacher . . . " ¹²

This club, "The Young People's Thrift Club," made another valuable contribution to the experiences of the children through helping them to enjoy poetry. Once a month, as a part of their meeting and after business was attended to, a poetry program was given, with children choosing poems to present to the Club. Sometimes plays or stories which had been read to them were dramatized, instead.

In some schools, where reading for pleasure and the use of many books as sources of information have never been a part of the experience of children, teachers are faced with the problem of arousing interest in books and the desire to read them. One teacher's report of her experience with this problem is of interest.

"How I developed the children's interest until they consciously wanted a library:

- (1) Reading short, interesting, and lively poems and stories during the opening exercises.
- (2) A story period every afternoon, for fifteen minutes, for the first four grades. I frequently started a story and let the children finish it during their leisure, or let a good reader from the upper grades finish the story while I continued with other classes.
- (3) After reading a story the children might make a poster which could be put on the bulletin board and help encourage other children to read the story. I frequently made posters for new books which came from neighboring libraries, to arouse interest. We also received Book Week posters, and the children entered posters in the Book Week Poster Contest.
- (4) Children were encouraged to read the books in our library. We had a library chart to check the number of books read by each child.
- (5) Interesting books were borrowed from neighboring libraries: the Leighton High School Library and the Dimmick Mem-

¹² Mrs. Van Bockern, *Op. cit.*

orial Library, Mauch Chunk; and a set of books from the Red Cross circulation was used.

- (6) Sometimes I told an interesting part of a book and stopped at an exciting part. We also had book reports in the language class.
- (7) Older children reported on books they had read during opening exercises. These reports were taken from outside reading.
- (8) If an excerpt from a book was in a reader, we tried to get the book and finish the story.
- (9) Clippings, pictures, and short stories were put on the bulletin board. These came from newspapers, magazines, and teachers' magazines.
- (10) Smaller children took library books home and their parents or older brothers and sisters read the stories to them.
- (11) Some children received books for Christmas gifts, and they shared the stories with the other children in school.
- (12) The upper grades made reading notebooks in which they put pictures illustrating stories, poems, newspaper clippings about authors, or new books, and short reviews of books which they had read.
- (13) Supplementary reading was encouraged. For example, while studying about Belgium, the children read *Belgian Twins* by Perkins.
- (14) Friends who came to visit spoke about incidents in books. On Armistice Day a Spanish War veteran made history of that period very real to us. The boys especially wished to read about the lives of those heroes.
- (15) During Book Week we gave a program which included short stories, poems, and several sketches from children's books. The parents and friends were interested.

"These many activities created an interest and a desire for a larger classroom library as the books which we borrowed could be kept only a short time. This led to our activity to raise sufficient money to buy twenty new books for our library."¹³

4. LANGUAGE BECOMES A TOOL FOR ENRICHED LIVING

It is evident from many of the reports of school activities that children are being given much opportunity to talk about and write about things which genuinely interest them. Thus language, instead of being formal and stilted, is vital in meeting real situations. A few examples of the written work of children will illustrate the type of work they are doing.

The first, a poem appearing in the school newspaper for January, 1936, is introduced with this note from the teacher:

¹³ Miss Mary E. Kramer, Carbon County.

"One day the wind of a sudden storm forced the door of the fire escape open with a 'bang.' Immediately afterward one girl wrote on a scrap of paper this poem:

‘A STORM

‘On wings of storm come snowflakes,
Aloft, and flying fast.
I look out through the window
To see them flying past.

‘They patter on the window panes.
The wind now opens the door.
They patter on the window panes
And maybe——even more.’”¹⁴

Another illustration appears in the section of *Franklin Review* entitled, "The Back of the Book," a collection of articles, poems, and stories by the boys and girls of the school. It is called "From My Schoolhouse Window."

"From my schoolhouse window I see a beautiful rock garden, nice clean steps, the road, lovely lilacs, big tall trees, and cars flying past on the highway. I look a little farther and see the big bank with the rose bushes on it. Oh, I can hardly wait until the flowers bloom there.

"Don't you wish that you could come to school and look out of our window? I am glad I still go to school and can see these beautiful things.

"There at the end of the lilac row I see the dogwood tree. It looks so very pretty with its white blossoms.

"Even the highway fence posts look nice. They have just been painted. They look like new.

"As I look closer I see bird houses in the trees and birds flying around. There is a little wren.

"The grass is covered with bright yellow dandelion flowers.

"Come take a look from my schoolhouse window.”¹⁵

Perhaps even better illustrations of the use of language in real situations are found in the many school papers that are being published by school children, and in the many instances in which children take a real part in planning, carrying on, and evaluating their own activities.

An indication of the improvement in language skills through use of the school paper is given in this report:

"My composition work was made much more interesting after we began editing a school newspaper each month. The school chose an editor for each month, and the editor chose his staff, but it was

¹⁴ The poem is signed, "Cherie Ann, Grade 6," and appears in the Forkston School News. Mr. E. H. Plessinger, Wyoming County, was the teacher at that time.

¹⁵ Marjorie Mease, Grade 5, Franklin School, Bucks County.

so arranged that everyone had a chance to help edit a paper during the year. The newspaper helped indirectly to improve the handwriting, as each month the school chooses someone to write the master copy for the hectograph. In English class when we had our composition lessons the material or stories written were judged and the best ones used for the school newspaper. The children took great pride in the art work in the newspaper as each child was given hectographed sheets for his own paper and he was to color them when he had his work finished.

"We have a long table in the room where the materials for the newspaper are kept; the children go there and work on it. The spelling was also improved as each wanted to be chosen the best speller so that he might have the job of going over all the spelling in the paper."¹⁶

B. SOME SCHOOLS SEEK TO DEVELOP HAPPY SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS

Schools have long recognized the importance of helping children develop habits of courtesy. Recently they have come to realize that children need to feel at ease with people in varied situations if they are to have really happy relationships with others. Hence they are seeking to give to rural children, whose social contacts are usually fewer than those of children in more congested areas, many experiences which will give them confidence in their ability to meet and talk and work with other people.

Both aspects of social adaptation are illustrated in a report from one rural teacher. He writes:

"Courtesy building is simply encouraging the child to appreciate helpfulness. The children are made to realize helpfulness and politeness by having these things practiced with them. As teacher, I make a special effort to take advantage of each opportunity to be of helpful service to the child. I pick up a fallen pencil, return it with a smile and without much ado. Pupils in nearly every case realize the helpfulness these acts bring to them. They are then willing to share courtesy with others not by strict command, but because of the helpfulness involved.

"The school banquet is one of the big events of the school year. From money received at our plays we use a small amount for the necessities of the banquet. Large tables are placed in the school-room. Parents, relatives, and friends of the pupils come to the school. Everyone brings something. The children make candy, cakes, ice cream, and all kinds of goodies. Everyone sits at the tables at the same time. Children assume major responsibility as hosts and hostesses."¹⁷

¹⁶ Miss Mildred Auten, Northumberland County.

¹⁷ Mr. Hoopert, Op. cit. Miss Auten of Northumberland County reports planning a party for the children and their mothers and helping the children to know the etiquette involved.

1. EASE IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS COMES THROUGH EXPERIENCING THEM

Other teachers help children to regard the school as similar to their homes, and the children have experience in serving as hosts and hostesses when guests come. Since every school has some visitors each year, and many more could be encouraged to come if a real purpose were to be served, this type of activity can be made to contribute most helpfully to a very important need of rural children. A page entitled "Notes and News" from the *Franklin Review* indicates that some children are having an opportunity to develop ease and social adaptation through such experiences:

"A WALK WITH MR. RUTTER"

"The other day Mr. Rutter came to our school. We are very glad to have him visit us. He asked me about the new things in our room. Mrs. Seylar told me that I could show him around the room.

"First we looked at the bulletin board. Mr. Rutter said that that was a good thing to have. Then I showed him the 'Pretty Corner' which was fixed up by the third grade. He asked me if the goldfish had names. He liked the 'Food Friends Book' that the third grade made.

"We went on to the Washington and Lincoln corner. Here Mr. Rutter looked at the pictures and asked me some questions. Thank goodness I could answer them. He wondered whether we had had a Lincoln program. I told him about our talks in opening exercises and the February program that we were giving for our mothers.

"After that we visited the 'Little Folks Corner' and the sand table. I showed him the blackboard border and the February pictures on the middle board. My guest asked who the different men in the pictures were.

"We reached the news board. He was pleased with it because we had many pictures there. When we got to the good papers which were on the wall I was glad one of mine was there, because he asked which was mine.

"Mr. Rutter saw the movie machine and asked what it was. I explained how it worked and showed him some of the pictures. It was time for my class so I asked Diane Geissinger to show him the things on the porch.¹⁸

"Mr. Rutter and I went to the porch. I showed him the castle first and told him that we were studying about castles in history. He asked me what we had named the castle. I told him that it was not finished and that we had not named it.

"He was very much interested in the museum and in our school paper exchange. I told him where the copies came from. He thought it was a fine idea to exchange papers.

"We hope Mr. Rutter liked the things he saw and the way we treated him. We like him very much."¹⁹

¹⁸ Helen Svitz and ¹⁹ Diane Geissinger are both pupils of the Franklin School.

Another situation commonly met by people of all ages is that demanding the carrying on of meetings according to parliamentary procedures. Several schools report active clubs of one type or another which give this experience. One teacher writes:

"Bi-monthly programs are presented entirely by individual classes who take full responsibility in selection, direction, and management thereof. In addition to developing responsibility in the child, I find that these programs are a large factor in overcoming self-consciousness and in acquiring poise for the children, as well as bringing to my attention latent talents which I try to develop through the school term."²⁰

C. TEACHERS FIND HELPFUL WAYS TO BROADEN THE INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

Reading corners, school newspapers, school journeys, museums, hobbies, science centers, and festivals of one type or another are among the many ways in which teachers endeavor to extend the interests of children. One teacher, believing that a May Day might be developed in her school, made it the incentive for learning about May Days and for acquiring new songs and rhythmic games suited to the occasion.²¹ Another reports bringing goldfish to school as a means of arousing interest in pets.²² Many report the use of the bulletin board to stimulate new interests.

1. THE SCHOOL JOURNEY LEADS TO NEW EXPERIENCES²³

School journeys are many and varied. One teacher writes: "We often go for a walk just for fun, but often there is an object to our trip. One day we searched for a cucumber tree, which is rare in this locality. One trip was for leaves for Christmas decorations. We visited a birch still one noon after I had given a talk on stills."²⁴

Among school journeys reported by rural teachers are a visit to a theatre;²⁵ a visit to the local waterworks to study sources of water supply;²⁶ a trip to the zoological gardens;²⁷ and trips to historic spots and industrial centers.²⁸ One school has a travel club composed of pupils from the fifth to eighth grades which make several trips each year.²⁹

One of the most elaborate school journeys reported gives evidence of a great deal of learning value of varied types. The teacher's account of it is given:

"We earned enough money during the term to take the entire eighth grade to Washington, D. C., in May. We were gone six days

²⁰ Mr. George J. Dick, Adams County.

²¹ Miss Auten, Op. cit.

²² Mrs. Beatrice Kostenbauder, Northumberland County.

²³ See Bulletin 200, *Expanding the Classroom*, published by the Department of Public Instruction, for further ideas.

²⁴ Mr. Landis, Op. cit.

²⁵ Mrs. Rachel B. Austen, Fayette County.

²⁶ Mrs. Elizabeth Van Sant, Bucks County.

²⁷ Mrs. Buckley, Op. cit.

²⁸ Mrs. Long, Op. cit., and Mrs. Seylar.

²⁹ Mr. P. Edwards Bohr, Northumberland County.

in all, visiting Harrisburg Capitol, Gettysburg, and Baltimore while away. The children did their own cooking and other work at tourists camps along the way. In the evenings about an hour was given over to writing up notebooks and collecting cards and pictures of interesting things visited during the day. The problems of economical buying for a group, planning cheap but satisfactory menus, properly planned sight-seeing tours so that a minimum of driving on congested streets was accomplished, were among the practical things handled by this group of children, none of whom were over fourteen years of age. All this was done under supervision."³⁰

Another school journey suggests a valuable means of helping children to make a desirable social adjustment. It was one of two outstanding trips made by the children during the past year.

"Our second trip was to our nearest town school which is a grade and secondary school combined. The first hour of the visit was spent in the auditorium where all the pupils listened to a talk by Healthy, the Milk Clown. After this the visited principal called upon a pupil from each of the grades in his school to escort the pupils from our school to their respective grades for the rest of the afternoon. Since only four of the twenty in my group had ever been in any other than a rural school before, it was very enlightening to them to see how things were done in a larger school. Strange to say, a few of the pupils had, up to this time, very formidable ideas about leaving our little school for secondary school, but after this trip I was pleased to see that every child had become enthusiastic and was looking eagerly forward to the one, two, three, or more years before he would be able to attend secondary school. The local school bus transported the pupils on this trip."³¹

2. THE SCHOOL PAPER LEADS TO NEW INTERESTS

The possibility that a school paper may serve as an effective part of the school's attempt to provide a rich and varied experience for children has already been suggested. The means of printing and distributing these papers, as well as the plans for the development of materials, vary widely. One plan has already been presented.³² Another school paper that has been published successfully for a number of years has been referred to from time to time. A seventh grade girl's account of how it is published gives important details.

"The Franklin Review' is the name of the school magazine which we publish four times a year.

"In an English period we plan our school paper. After that all the work is done in our spare time until it is time to put it together.

"We each write up our material and hand it to the editor. She looks it over and corrects it and gives it to the teacher,

³⁰ Mrs. A. C. Boudeman, Lycoming County.

³¹ Mrs. Jerauld, Op. cit.

³² See page 55 in section A of this chapter.

Mrs. Seylar. Mrs. Seylar types the stencils, the boys mimeograph it, we put it together, and our paper is done.

"Until this year we had a hectographed paper which was not nearly as nice as the one we have now. Through the kindness of Mr. Bidwell we got the mimeograph machine. This goes much faster and does better work.

"The first page in our paper gives the names of the members of the staff. We have an editor-in-chief, associate editors, grade reporters, art editor, humor editor, and business manager.

"'Notes and News' is the most important department in our paper. Here we tell all about our school events, contests, trips, and so on. Some topics in our last paper in the department were: 'Wild Flower Garden,' 'Assembly Programs,' 'Visitors,' 'Bird House Contest,' 'Library News,' etc.

"'Grade Reports' is also important. Here we tell about what each grade is doing and how and why they are doing it.

"The next part is the 'Literary Department.' In it we put poems, stories, essays, book reviews, and other things written by the pupils.³³

"The last part is the 'Humor Corner' which does not have to be explained.

"The cover is also important. It is always a freehand drawing, and the best one handed in. It must go with the month and have a special meaning. The art editor either makes or collects from the others the drawings for the inside pages.

"The business manager has his hands full. He must see that all the bills are paid and that all the money comes in. He must keep within the budget, too. He must also keep a record of all the money that comes in and all that goes out.

"We sell our paper because we must buy all our own supplies. We ask ten cents a copy or thirty-five cents for the year's subscription.

"After all the bills are paid we take the money that is left and buy books for our library. The money is always spent very soon.

"We are very proud of our school paper and our parents are proud, too. It always has about twenty pages and I think that is a pretty good sized book for a little one-teacher school."³⁴

Comparison of early copies of the paper with later issues shows that the interests of children have reached out to take in new activities and new viewpoints. Editorials in a recent paper indicate this, as do the reports of an exchange that has been carried on with other schools publishing school papers.

³³ In later issues of *The Franklin Review*, this section is called "The Back of the Book."

³⁴ Esther Sawka, Grade VII, Franklin School, Bucks County.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES OF SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS

3. SCHOOL MUSEUMS MAY GIVE VITAL EXPERIENCES

Many schools collect interesting articles of one type or another. In many instances children work out their own guides or catalogs, telling about each article, what it is, where and how it was obtained, and other information of interest. One form of such an activity, developed around a special phase of school work and not made permanent, is described briefly:

"When we studied colonial history the boys and girls borrowed from the people of the community all articles used during that period of history. We had a very nice collection. The girls dressed dolls to show the different types of dresses worn in colonial times."³⁵

A more permanent type of museum is described by one of the pupils who helped to develop it:

"One day last year Mrs. Seylar asked us if we would like to have a museum in our school. We were all anxious to start it.

"We brought old money, foreign money, embroidery from foreign lands, old linen, old jewelry, arrow heads, and many other interesting things. Near the end of the term Earl Place brought something very fine. He found a real Indian tomahawk head in the woods and brought it to school. The children whose parents came from other lands brought samples of handwriting from those lands.

"One of the boys who was a pupil of Mrs. Seylar's joined the navy. He sent us Chinese money and a newspaper, sugar cane, and many pictures.

"Our school correspondence friends sent us fossils, Indian pottery, beads from rock of Niagara Falls, etc."³⁶

"In this way we received many, many things for our museum. We take the best of care of them.

"We use our museum every day. We find things in it for history and geography, and we write English compositions about other things. We would not like to be without our museum."³⁷

4. CHILDREN'S INTERESTS LEAD TO MANY HOBBIES

The museum is one result of a very general interest—collecting. Other schools report the use of collecting in ways that are as interesting, and sometimes actually do produce museums, though they are not so named. For example, one teacher writes:

"This school is fond of collecting. Some of the things collected are: maps, pictures of Pennsylvania scenery, and travel literature. The map collection is especially fine and goes all the way from one of their own township to that of Antarctica. Friends of the school and of the teacher have given generously to the youthful collectors."³⁸

³⁵ Miss Erma Gold, Northumberland County.

³⁶ Reference is made to a school letter exchange, discussed later.

³⁷ Paul Smetzer, Grade VIII, Franklin School, Bucks County.

³⁸ Mrs. Inez V. Bridge, Adams County.

Others report collecting stamps and using these collections as a source of learning experiences of varied types. In one school, "A stamp collecting book is designed in art class. The purposes and results to be obtained are discussed with the children. Stamps are collected at home, from relatives and friends. Children write letters asking for stamps; in this way enlarged letter writing experiences result. By contacting friends, enlarged experiences in the field of personal contacts are realized. Children soon begin to notice differences in stamps. These observations lead to questions as to the why of the picture on the stamp and the location of the country signified by the stamp. Various questions are brought to the child. In the search for answers enlarged experiences from many angles result."³⁹

A rather different use of children's interests was based on boys' participation in hunting and trapping. "We studied animals, especially fur-bearing animals, this past year," the teacher writes,⁴⁰ "Many of the boys trap or else have older brothers who do. We read about these animals in 'Trappers' Guide' magazine, and in price list literature. Only the boys made a thorough study of this. They even brought pelts to school which they had skinned or prepared. I, too, learned information from these discussions. It was most interesting."

Interest in the use of tools is common among boys, and is shared by many girls. It leads to many worthwhile activities. In one school, "during the winter the children carried out wood work activities. They used coping saws and wood from store boxes. They made toothbrush holders, flower holders, sewing kits, bracket shelves, tie racks, and garden ornaments. This wood work was done before school and during the noon hour. The boys particularly liked this work. One mother told me her boy for the first time was anxious to attend school regularly."⁴¹

A more elaborate program, reported under the title of "Elementary Manual Training," led to the making of many things of real value to the school program as well as to the development of children's abilities and further interests:

"All children like to make things, and so, regardless of cost, I personally buy all the material I can afford. . . . My kit of tools has a value of thirty dollars and consists of six different saws, two planes, three hammers, three chisels, a brace and bit, drills, square, etc. . . .

"My daily program remains practically unchanged, the work being done mostly at noon and during recess. If it is a box that we are going to make, I may take a few minutes of school time in talking about it. Then at recess I start to make my copy. The children watch, and some will help me, and then as they learn how to proceed they start on their own boxes. They may want the box for themselves or maybe for a married sister or

³⁹ Mr. Hoopert, Op. cit.

⁴⁰ Miss Evelyn A. Koch, Union County.

⁴¹ Mrs. Long, Op. cit.

their mother. The girls are just as interested as the boys and as a result turn out neater woodwork. I have as many girls at woodwork as boys.

"When snow comes the boys make puddle jumpers. All that is required is a barrel stave, a stick of wood and a board nailed on the top of the post. The toboggan is hard to make. The curved front is the most difficult to accomplish. The end to be curved must be steamed and then bent slowly over a heavy piece of round iron that has been heated nearly red hot. The rope on both sides gives a hand hold for the rider, and also keeps the curve in front from straightening out. Skis are bent in the same way."⁴²

5. MANY INCIDENTAL OPPORTUNITIES ARISE

Many everyday happenings can be used to extend children's interests in things remote from them or to deepen their awareness of things near at hand. Several uses made of such incidents or situations are listed briefly below.

"*Study of a WPA project in changing the course of a creek.* Why is it necessary? What damage can the creek do? How is the wall built so that it will be strong? Who pays for the work? Why? What do you think of this work? Where did you get your opinions?"⁴³

"*Barn fire experience—prevention study.* Why did the teacher keep you away from the barn? What caused the fire? Was this carelessness? What damage was done? How could it have been prevented? Is it insured? What is insurance? Why do the insurance companies make certain rules? What other causes of fires do you know? How can we prevent fires?"⁴⁴

"*Lantern slides.* We quite often get a set of lantern slides to show in connection with an interesting geography lesson. We use the last hour of the day for the show. The children enjoy these shows very much. I dare say that half of them have never seen a moving picture. Our school is twenty-five miles from the nearest city. I am interested in trying to get a projector that can be operated from a car battery. I have a set of colored slides which I made from the pictures I took on one of my Western trips."⁴⁵

"*Visit of our health officer.* Where does she live? How did she get her position? Why do we not have a local health officer any more? What are the duties of health officers? Why are some diseases quarantined? Inspection of public buildings."⁴⁶

⁴² Mr. Landis, Op. cit.

⁴³ Mrs. Margaret Seylar, Bucks County.

⁴⁴ Mrs. Seylar.

⁴⁵ Mr. Landis, Op. cit.

⁴⁶ Mrs. Austin, Op. cit.

"Voting. School was closed on election day so the building could be used for voting. What do we mean by voting? Who may vote? Why should people vote? What is the method of voting used in our town? What are parties? (We elected officers for our school club later.)"⁴⁷

"Local information. We visited gas stations and other business places where worthwhile advertising matter was to be had, such as maps, historical booklets, political data, or pictures and information on places of geographic interest. These booklets were studied for the useful information they contained. Special attention was given to interesting facts and places close to our own school district, where the children could easily visit by themselves or with other members of the family."⁴⁸

Two other means of extending interests are described briefly by children who have participated in them.

"Letter exchange. Our teacher found the addresses of boys and girls from other states in a magazine. She asked us if we wanted to write to them and find out about their states from them. Of course we wanted to, but we decided to put our name in the magazines so that we could get letters.

"We received two hundred letters. We heard from all states but three, from Central America, Mexico, Alaska, and Canada. After answering the letters we asked our new friends if they would like to exchange state note books with us. Many of them agreed, so we studied the history and geography of our State very carefully and then prepared a mimeographed book. The other schools made hand-written books for us. Many of them were very good and contained pictures which were interesting. We have a collection of sixty books in our museum made by other schools.

"We all enjoyed writing to other schools and getting the facts about the states from people who live there, but most of us agreed that:

"'East, West, Home is best.'"⁴⁹

"Moving pictures at high school. We each pay ten cents to Mrs. Seylar and go to high school with Mr. Haney on his bus. When we get there we go upstairs where the movie camera is set up. The first pictures were silent ones and weren't so good but now we have talkies. We see a movie every month. Some of the best pictures that we saw were:

The Man Without a Country	The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
Robin Hood	Roaring Roads
Black Beauty	Davy Crockett and the Alamo
Robinson Crusoe	The Border Patrol
	Rip Van Winkle" ⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Mrs. Van Sant, Op. cit.

⁴⁸ Mrs. Boudeman, Op. cit.

⁴⁹ Esther Sawka, at the time of writing was in grade VII of the Franklin School.

⁵⁰ Linford Labs, also in grade VII of the Franklin School.

D. PROBLEMS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE MET IN PRACTICAL WAYS

Increasing attention is being given to the provision of healthful and safe conditions in small rural schools. In many instances this requires the development of arrangements quite different from those possible to larger schools having running water and other modern conveniences. One such school handled the problem this way:

"In the hall we have a stand covered with cream and green oilcloth on which stands the covered water jar and the wash dish. Above the washstand is a small cupboard divided into sections for the individual drinking cups. Under each section is the name of the child to whom the cup belongs. The money for these improvements was partly supplied by the school board and partly raised by the pupils themselves. . . . Articles purchased for the school by funds raised in this manner will make the pupils feel that the responsibility for the new things is really theirs."⁵¹

1. UNDERSTANDINGS OF HEALTH NEEDS ARE DEVELOPED THROUGH REAL EXPERIENCES

As a fifth grade child states it,

"Health in our school is very simple and sensible. We have daily health rules that we follow. Each morning a monitor checks us to see if we have obeyed them and marks the chart.

"Some of the things we must do are: brush our teeth, comb our hair, wash hands and face, sleep with open windows, carry a clean handkerchief, have clean unpolished fingernails, sleep ten hours, drink milk, and so forth.

"If someone in school gets a cold or measles or some other disease we all gargle our throats and are very careful. We have not had an epidemic in our school in ten years.

"When the doctor examined us this year he said we had the cleanest teeth and throats and best posture of any school he examined. We are proud of this and think it is because we obey our health rules."⁵²

In many schools hot lunches play an important part in maintaining child health and in helping children learn important facts about nutrition, cleanliness, and related health matters. The use of a health inspection period each morning, sometimes formally conducted and sometimes informally handled by the teacher, is often helpful. A plan that has apparently had considerable appeal to the children who practice it is reported here.

"A school nurse, a pupil, has charge of the morning inspection period in the school I teach. A different nurse is selected

⁵¹ Mrs. Jerauld, *Op. cit.* In speaking of the plan of having children share in the cost of equipment, Mrs. Jerauld refers to other furniture and equipment in addition to that described.

⁵² Patricia Hoxworth, grade V, the Franklin School.

each week. She has charge of the first aid kit and administering first aid with the help of the teacher. I have obtained a cap for the nurse to wear while on duty. The plan has proved very successful. The girls are very eager to be the nurse. . . .

"I feel that the children have become generally more health conscious through the use of this plan. The appearance of the children has improved, handkerchiefs have become plentiful, the first aid kit is always in fine condition, the drinking fountain is cared for in more sanitary fashion, and the pupils often suggest improvements in the school; even personal suggestions to individual pupils are given in a congenial way."⁵³

In another situation the health examinations regularly given to children in the schools opened the way to important health learnings and health improvement. "Strangely enough, the examining doctor found many cases of underweightness when he examined in the fall, so we weighed carefully each month and measured at intervals, in the meantime having much discussion and interest in health class as to food values, nutrition, vitamins, and all. At the close of the term we were gratified to find great improvement in the pupils' conditions physically, scarcely any remaining underweight in spite of an epidemic of measles in the spring."⁵⁴

E. TEACHERS FIND TIME FOR REALLY IMPORTANT THINGS

The feeling that there isn't time during school hours for many of the things they would like to do, is often voiced by teachers. Frequently this has shut out many of the enrichment activities so important to children in small rural schools. Increasingly, a different viewpoint is being expressed, the belief that there can be time for whatever is really important, and that enrichment experiences can and will be provided.

To this end, the old practice of "hearing recitations" is giving way to a much more realistic plan of guiding children's learning. The daily program is made flexible so that it can be adjusted to the varying needs of the children. The meeting of classes has become much less important than what the children are doing during their hours in school, and work sometimes is carried on informally among small groups having common needs, or children work alone to achieve individual accomplishments that seem important.⁵⁵

1. CONVENIENT AND HELPFUL SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS ARE PROVIDED

The provision of a room so arranged and equipped that real work can take place is fundamental to such purposeful work in the school. Teachers are finding many ways of achieving such arrangements. A number of brief reports indicate some of the most usable ideas.

⁵³ Mr. Bohr, *Op. cit.*

⁵⁴ Mrs. Van Bockern, *Op. cit.*

⁵⁵ No attempt is made to give specific reports of how the program has been made flexible, since they would of necessity be lengthy. See Chapter VIII for a report of possibilities.

"Our equipment is very meager. I had a ply-board table for the tiny tots to gather round for reading and handwork, using chairs made from orange crates."⁵⁶

"My desk and other furniture is shifted; reference books, dictionaries, etc., are in the rear of the room to facilitate more quiet and efficient work and to prevent distraction on the part of the classes."⁵⁷

"The little children, that is, grades one to four, made window models. . . . We had no sand table but . . . used the wide window sills. We placed newspapers and boxes filled with sand or salt on the window sills."⁵⁸

"Our equipment in the room for special work is nothing more than any teacher might collect. We have a ten-foot table which is used when a group works at a project. It is also used as a dinner table when we eat hot lunches, and for many other purposes. We have a large five-burner oil stove, oven attached, which we use to cook our hot dinners in the winter time. Coping saws which we use in our wood work, as well as enamel, varnish, shellac, and the like, come from the ten-cent store. This composes our equipment."⁵⁹

"Taking care of the children's wraps is usually a problem of the one-teacher school. The boys made a clothes pole and put it across the end of the classroom, the proper height from the floor. The children then saw a need for coat hangers, and each child provided one for himself. Having the wraps hung up properly helped our room to have a tidy appearance and taught the children the proper care of their clothing."⁶⁰

"One device which proves very helpful to me is my file. I have one shelf in the supply cupboard reserved especially for it. It consists of twelve large oak tag folders, nine of which are labeled with the names of the school months, one is labeled 'Primary,' one 'Miscellaneous Art,' and one 'Miscellaneous Pictures.' In these folders I keep all the art plans, stories, pictures, seat work ideas, and the like, which I have been able to collect. Being arranged under these headings makes it possible for me to find things quickly. In the future I expect to add folders for geography, history, science, and English, and if the need arises some other subjects."⁶¹

"All primary activities are confined to one side of the room. Portable chairs are provided and the first four grades have their own sand table, work table, bench for community work and their own bulletin board. Chairs may be moved into groups for cooperative activities. . . . Seat work is kept in cloth pockets conveniently near the children. Small metal boxes were collected, sandpapered, and enameled, a different color for each group, to hold seatwork. All work is kept near

⁵⁶ Mrs. Long, Op. cit.

⁵⁷ Mr. Dick, Op. cit.

⁵⁸ Miss Koch, Op. cit.

⁵⁹ Mrs. Yaw, Op. cit.

⁶⁰ Mrs. Long, Op. cit.

⁶¹ Mrs. Jerauld, Op. cit. While no report of its being done is available from a school in Pennsylvania, the development of a classroom file, to hold materials found useful by the children, is known to be of great value.

the children. They have a great deal of freedom to move about and work in their own half of the room and, strange as it may seem to advocates of 'pin-drop' order, there is comparatively little disorder and confusion."⁶²

2. CHILDREN SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THESE CLASSROOMS

"Children should be taught to share the responsibility of keeping the room in order. Let them understand that it is their classroom. If a teacher tactfully asks two or three times in the fall, 'Eleanor and Alice, will you wash the boards today?' 'James, would you like to dust the erasers or straighten the blinds?' 'Mary, if you like, you may arrange the books on the tables,' every one in the room will soon be eager to do his share of such tasks. I never assign these tasks to any particular person, but they are usually spoken for a week or two ahead, and each seems to enjoy doing the work as well as the person before him did it."⁶³

Children's responsibility may begin very early in the year, as this statement indicates:

"For the past term the enrollment of my school was forty-three. My first task was to secure seats and tables to seat all the pupils properly. These seats and tables had been arranged in groups a few days before the opening of school. The seventh and eighth grade pupils helped me to paint all our chairs, tables, bookcases, and cupboards about two weeks before school opened. A few days before school opened we met again to arrange the furniture in the room, distribute the children's books and other supplies needed during the term, and put away the new supplies."⁶⁴

Two brief quotations from children's writings indicate their pleasure in having opportunities to share in the responsibilities of the classroom and its activities, and in the evaluation of their own work.

"Housekeeping is one of the most important things that should be done in school. In the first place, we will all have to keep house some day, or live in a house kept by someone else; and in the second place it is up to us to keep our school as nice as possible.

"In our school we clean right after lunch each day, before we go outside. If it is necessary we clean at other times, too.

"We each have our own special jobs which we tend, such as sweeping, dusting, washing boards, carrying water, tending the flowers, greeting visitors, straightening cupboards and the magazine rack, and so on. Each month we change jobs with someone else.

⁶² Mrs. Bridge, Op. cit.

⁶³ Miss Lillian Foley, Crawford County.

⁶⁴ Miss Alma Hornberger, Northumberland County.

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"We think this is the right thing to do and we live up to it. We don't do these jobs because we must, but because we want to."⁶⁵

The second quotation is from a letter written by a little girl in grade IV. She says, among other things:

"I am sending you a copy of our special report cards. We often talk about things that should be on them and help Mrs. Seylar plan them. One time Mrs. Seylar marked them with each child right there telling her what marks he deserved for each thing."⁶⁶

F. AVAILABLE SOURCES OF INEXPENSIVE MATERIALS ARE USED

Teachers of small rural schools are resourceful in finding ways of supplying needed materials. Orange crates, boxes, wrapping paper, calendars, and other incidental materials are used. Spools prove useful in making simple furniture and toys. Natural clay is found and used in many ways in the classroom. Even the seeds and branches of trees have their use, as this teacher's report indicates:

"For Christmas decorations we take sticks of elder and peel them, paint them with bright water colors, and then cut them into inch lengths. We string them with discs of colored paper between two wooden beads. We color maple seeds in the same way and string them; we use ash seeds, also. Pressed leaves colored on both sides with aluminum paint combined with a cluster of ash seeds painted red makes a pretty decoration."⁶⁷

It is evident, from the varied reports given, that teachers are finding a great many ways to meet the outstanding needs of children in their schools. While no one school is using or could use all of them, and while many other activities are being carried on that are not reported, the ideas presented represent an effort toward improved work in the small schools that is of infinite importance to the welfare and development of the children who attend them. Furthermore, as limitations of one type are met by the resourceful teacher, new possibilities for enrichment of school experiences arise.

⁶⁵ Esther Sawka, Grade VII, Franklin School.

⁶⁶ Grace Hinkel, Grade IV, Franklin School.

⁶⁷ Mr. Landis, Op. cit.

VII. YOUR COMMUNITY OFFERS VALUABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN

It is evident, from the reports presented in Chapters V and VI of this bulletin, that some rural teachers have found rich resources for learning in their local communities. But what does your community offer? Man is noted for his ability to see his neighbor's opportunities and to overlook his own. He has to learn to discover what is near at hand. Perhaps you have opportunities at hand for your school that are more promising than any you have imagined.

A. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO KNOW THESE EXPERIENCES

One of the most important services you can perform, for yourself as well as for your school, is to discover the valuable learning experiences your community offers. How can you help any child to get his bearings in the world unless you know what his small personal world includes? How can you follow the psychologically sound practice of beginning with familiar situations and problems and working from them to the unknown, unless you know what situations and problems are familiar to these children? How can you help children to be alert to what goes on about them, and curious about why things are as they are, unless you, too, are alert, constantly seeking to know and to understand? How can you know what enrichment should be offered these children, unless you have discovered what is lacking in their out-of-school experiences?

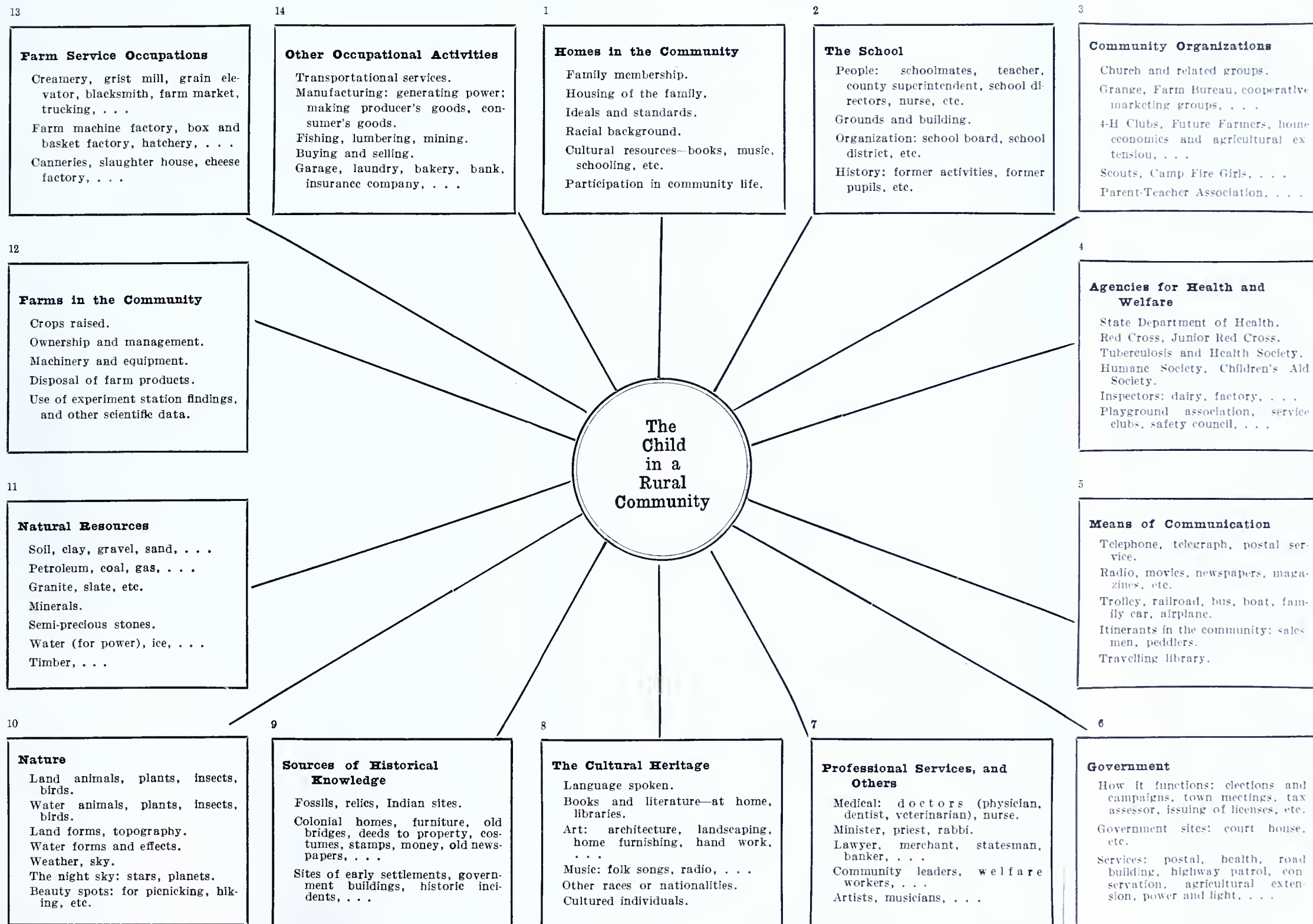
You wish to discover the opportunities for learning that are a part of the daily life of your children. Some of these are distinctly rural, farm-life activities. These are uniquely yours, for they belong to the communities of your type, and are not easily available to children in industrial and urban areas. Some are common to all types of communities; these are as important for your purposes as are those that are distinctly rural.

You wish also to discover opportunities for learning that are not yet a part of the daily life of your children, but which might become vital, enriching experiences. These are the resources which are farther away, either in distance, or in time, or in the interests of the group. They are needed in order to extend the children's interests and give them broader, richer lives. Where shall you look for them?

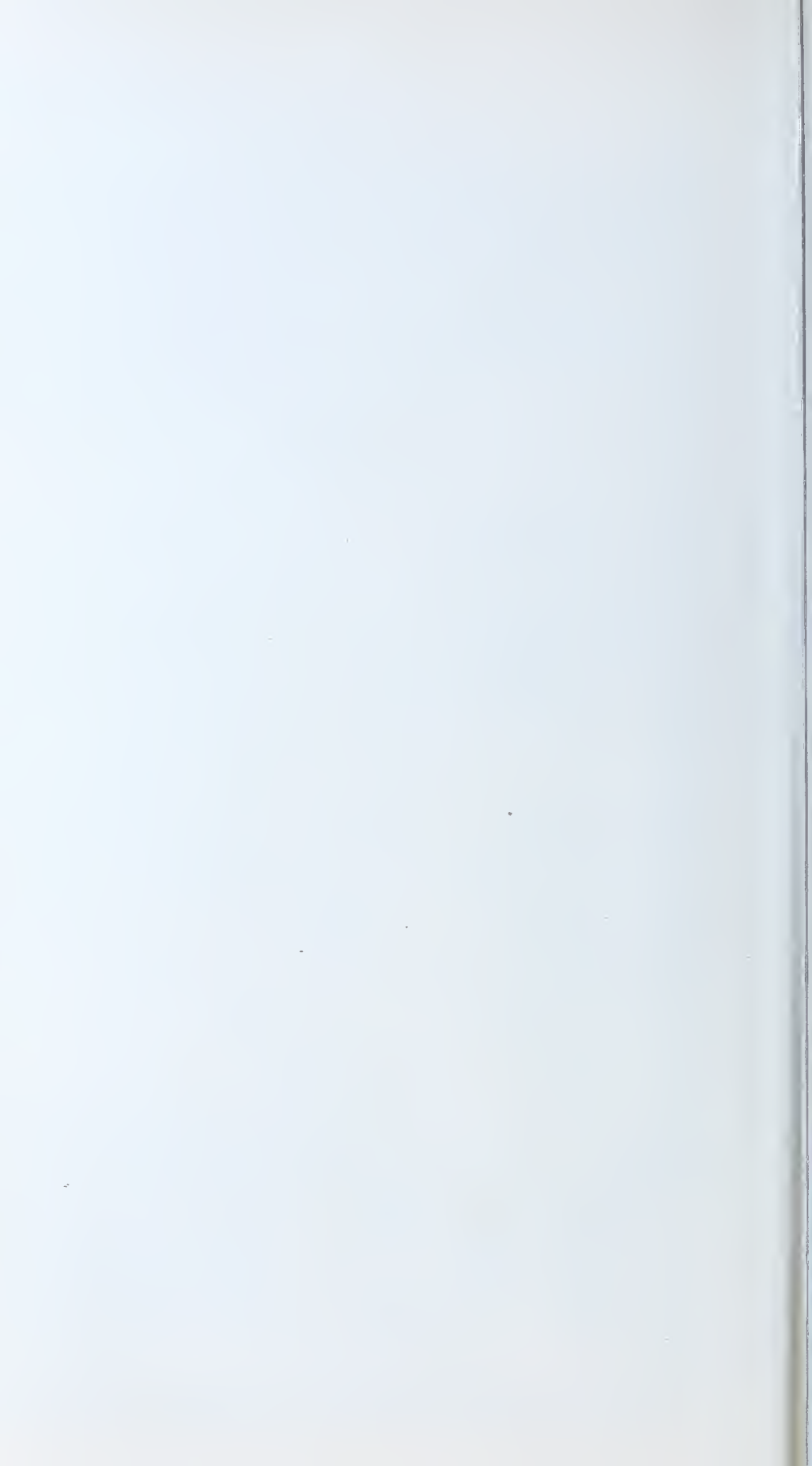
B. A SURVEY OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT IS SUGGESTED

The accompanying chart has been prepared to help you decide what to look for. It suggests, by its form, that your major concern is with the child in the rural community, and with the ways in which the various phases of his environment now influence or can be made to influence him. Obviously you could not use all of the learning experiences that might arise from all of these areas, within one school

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LEARNING*



* This chart is a revision of the chart entitled "Environment for Learning Experiences of the Child in a Rural Community," previously issued in tentative form by the Department of Public Instruction.



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year. But as you think through each of them, you may discover some things that are particularly appropriate for your school situation and within the limits of what you are prepared to do.

1. HOMES IN THE COMMUNITY*

Knowing the homes of your community may help you to discover needs as well as resources. Either of these may lead to learning experiences. Here, for example, is a family composed of father, mother, several children, and a grandmother. The grandmother and both parents are foreign-born, though they speak the English language acceptably. Their home is immaculately clean, and well furnished in a quiet, unpretentious fashion. Books and pictures play little part in their home life, but the mother's interest in needlework is evident. The family has lived in the community but three or four years, and takes little part in organized community activities. They neighbor with one or two families nearby who, though older residents, do not seem to "belong."

One of the children in the family has not made a very satisfactory adjustment in school, either socially or scholastically. When a new teacher visited their home, the immediate response of an older sister was, "Well, what's gone wrong now?" But when the teacher replied, "Nothing is wrong. Mary has been telling me about her mother's hooked rugs, and I came, hoping I might get to see them. I'm very much interested in hooked rugs," the situation became immediately friendly. A hooked rug was loaned to the school, and became the focal point of many interesting activities, including considerable study of similar crafts carried on in various parts of the world, a study of dyes, and experience in making simple rugs of several types.

Not only did this contact with a home in the community furnish the lead to some very valuable factual learnings for the children; it also contributed immeasurably to their understanding and appreciation of people of another nationality, and it helped both the child and her parents to feel themselves a real and valued part of the community.

2. THE SCHOOL

Perhaps you think of your school only as a place where children come to learn what we consider necessary about the world in which they live. But it is also a part of that world and a very important part, both to them and to the whole American nation. The history of their school, its relationship to other parts of the governmental setup, the people who direct it and serve it, all these are valuable sources of learning. The county superintendent of schools or his assistant visits you occasionally, and doubtless the children are very much interested in his coming. Do you use this opportunity for learning to the fullest possible extent?

* Numbers of topics correspond to numbers on the chart "Community Resources for Learning."

Perhaps you have an attractively landscaped, adequately equipped schoolground. But probably you do not. Do you see what a worthwhile enterprise the development of your grounds could become for your school? What a variety of learning experiences it might include?

3. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

What organizations exist in your community? Are there organizations for school age children? Would membership in them be of value to your children? Are there organizations for adults, whose major interest is in farm, home, or community problems? Perhaps they have information which they would be glad to make available to the school, in helping you solve some of your real problems of living.

Here is a rural school whose teacher felt that the older boys, and perhaps some of the girls, should have an opportunity to learn the use of woodworking tools. Yet she was so unskilled that she hesitated to direct such activities herself. Upon investigation she found that the organization of a 4-H Club, with a responsible man from the community, skilled in the use of tools and very much interested in boys, as its leader, was the best solution of her problem. In this instance the discovery of an important community resource grew out of recognition of a need.

4. AGENCIES FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE

These agencies may serve as resources for learning in at least two major ways: they may stimulate the desire to learn about some particular phase of health and safety; and they may serve as sources of reliable information. The visit of the inspector to a dairy farm in the neighborhood may arouse considerable interest, if the teacher is alert to its possibilities; and this interest, once aroused, might lead to many related problems of health, safety, governmental protection, and the like. Many of the agencies listed might be helpful in supplying the information called for by these problems.

5. MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Anything that helps the child to make contacts or discover interests beyond his immediate community, or to get information about the more remote areas of the world is of great value. Today, means of extending interests are plentiful.

One day, not many years ago, children in countless little rural schools were watching to see the Graf Zeppelin pass on its round-the-world flight. Now airplanes pass over many communities in regularly scheduled flights. Do they arouse your curiosity? Do your children show evidence of wanting to find out something about them? Or, do they feel that such things do not belong in school? It would be interesting to discover just how much that is worthwhile could arise from trying to find out about the airplane that passes over each day

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—where it goes, what it carries, what type of plane it is, why it is used in preference to other types, and many related questions. Probably many sources of information would be used, many communications, both oral and written, entered into, and many interests discovered, before its limits were reached.

6. GOVERNMENT

One of the difficult but necessary things we all must do is to try to understand our government: how it is organized, and how it serves us. Contact with local government in rural communities is fairly simple and fairly direct—much more simple and direct than it can be in larger centers. Have you thought of the many chances your children have to see government actually functioning and to know the ways in which it serves them? Do you see how you might use these opportunities to deepen their understanding and to lead them on to an interest in other phases of government?

A study of what the Government is doing for soil conservation has very close relationship to farm interests. The work of the Civilian Conservation Corps will interest children, especially in areas where its work is observed. The work of the highway patrol has already reached many schools. Yet few schools have seen all the possibilities for learning which any of these government services offer.

7. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE

Every community has a few people who stand out as being especially important, either because they belong to a special profession, because they have attained positions of distinction in the larger world, or because they are the recognized leaders of their communities. Such people have special knowledge, special experience, or special understanding, which are helpful to others. Though they are usually busy people, many of them are interested in helping school children with problems that are vital and are glad to offer their special knowledge when asked for it. Of course you and the children owe them the courtesy of planning how you can use their time and contributions most economically, so that you do not impose upon them.

8. THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

In the many centuries that lie behind us, the human race has developed many highly complicated languages; it has accumulated a great deal of information and opinion in books; it has expressed itself through various forms of literature, art, and music; it has developed many crafts, many customs, many beliefs. Every community has something of this cultural heritage, but often does not appreciate all that it has, for its preoccupation with the new and the modern blinds it to some good things from the past.

One rural school discovered that perhaps its richest source of learning experiences lay in its varied nationality background. Each

nationality had its unique cultural contributions. The children, in seeking to discover these, not only increased their knowledge and understanding of how various people live, but also improved their attitudes toward others almost immeasurably. Another school found a study of the handicrafts of their community particularly stimulating. Still another became interested in the songs and games used by their parents and grandparents. Many interesting possibilities exist for the use of the community's cultural inheritance.

9. SOURCES OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

Every community has some points of historic interest. They may be only of local interest, for the insight they give into how people lived in early days in the community. They may be related to the early history of the State or Nation. Or they may go back to pre-historic times, or to the period when Indians made their homes in this section of the country. Many rural schools are discovering and using resources of these types in highly interesting ways.

10. NATURE

Opportunities to learn from nature are almost limitless. They depend on your alertness and that of the children to what is happening about you.¹

Did you ever see a mackerel sky. What causes it? Why is it called a mackerel sky? Does it foretell anything about the weather? Have you ever wondered about anything like this? If so, what did you do about it? Perhaps you just dropped the matter, but if you didn't, where did you go for information? Where *would* you get information on such a subject? Your children might be interested, some time when they have noticed something especially interesting about the sky.

Is it difficult to strike underground water in your locality? Perhaps that's why your school doesn't have a well on the grounds. (Although it is more probable that that is not the real reason.) Perhaps, on the other hand, you have free-running springs nearby. Do you know why? Is there any relationship between abundance of ground water and the kind of rock or soil? Perhaps this may prove of interest to your school.

Whatever aspects of nature you and your children become interested in, you should remember two or three things. One of them is that none of you is likely to know all that is to be known about any one thing. Then, too, it is quite probable that some of the things you have always accepted as facts are not entirely true. Therefore, you will want to be sure that you cultivate an inquiring attitude of mind, and that you have access to reliable sources of information.

¹ For an interesting report of what one group of children and their teacher did, see the following: Crofoot, Bess L. "Teaching Rural Children Elementary Science," *Childhood Education*, Vol. XIV, No. 5, January 1938.

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11. NATURAL RESOURCES

These have much the same values for learning as the items suggested under Nature. Since they are classed as resources, they lead also to a study of man's use of them, with the important questions of conservation, private versus public ownership, and the like, as added points of interest.

12. FARMS IN THE COMMUNITY

These seem to be among the greatly under-used resources for learning in the rural community. Yet they supply some of the most valuable leads for school experiences, as well as opportunities to learn of many things, through actually seeing and experiencing them. A few illustrations will suggest possibilities.

A small combine had been purchased by a farmer in a neighboring community, and was being hired by nearby farmers to harvest their wheat. They found that the rates he charged made this method much less expensive than the old way of cutting, hauling, and threshing the wheat. Of course the boys of the neighborhood were intensely interested in the combine, and spent all the time they could, watching it work. One shy nine-year-old boy was able to explain how it worked to an interested group of children as clearly and completely as any adult could have done. If you had been the teacher in this neighborhood school, what use would you have made of such an interest?

A great many Pennsylvania farmers sell milk through one or another of the dairy marketing cooperatives. Others sell eggs through egg auctions. An increasing number of Pennsylvania farmers market potatoes in labeled packages. Perhaps farmers in your district are interested in one of these agencies, or in a similar one serving another crop. What possibilities for learning do you see in it for the children of your school?

13. FARM SERVICE OCCUPATIONS

One of the delights of the small farm boy in days gone by was the trip with his father to the blacksmith shop to have the horses shod or to the mill to have grist ground for cattle feed, or perhaps for the family's bread. It meant a long day, and a very tired small boy when evening came, but it was an event not to be missed. Such trips are much rarer now, for the blacksmith probably comes to the farm when horses need shoeing with his equipment loaded in a truck; and the grist has been replaced by a standardized prepared feed.

Nevertheless, many occupations exist primarily to take care of the farmer's crops, and contacts with these industries are a potential part of the farm child's experience. Perhaps a truck calls regularly at farms in the community to collect milk or cream for a nearby creamery. What happens to the produce after it leaves the farm is a question that interests children. A brief stop at the creamery for

butter may give some child a glimpse of what is done there. Could your school develop this interest into a more complete and satisfying experience for a greater number of children?

14. OTHER OCCUPATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The value of school journeys as a source of learning experiences has been already discovered by many teachers. Some of these journeys might well be to see kinds of occupational activities that are not a part of the everyday life of the child. You may find it helpful to make a brief survey of activities of these types that are carried on in nearby areas, and then to consider which ones have greatest learning value for your children.

You may want to make another use of activities of this kind. In certain sections of Pennsylvania, small factories have been built in open-country neighborhoods. Small hosiery mills are an illustration of this. Why have they been established there, when we are accustomed to think of manufacturing as an urban industry? What makes it possible for them to be maintained in these open-country neighborhoods now, when a few years ago none existed in such localities? Many possibilities for understanding our complex social-economic organization grow out of interest in situations of this sort.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ARE NOT EQUALLY VALUABLE FOR LEARNING

Out of the many possibilities which your community offers for the enrichment and vitalization of the work of your classroom, some will have greater value than others for your particular group of children. How shall you choose which have the greatest worth? The following criteria for the selection of a learning activity may help you to decide.

1. *It Should Supplement Other Learning Experiences Provided by the School, the Home, and the Community, so That All Desirable Lines of Development Are Provided for Each Child*

If you are thinking of well-rounded growth and development of every child as the goal of your school activities, you will want to encourage interest in those community experiences that promise growth along lines that are most needed. These will vary from time to time, and from school to school. Certain needs are so common to rural children, however, that you will want to have them in mind always. One of these is the need for social adjustment. Because of the individualistic nature of the child's life outside of school, the activities selected by the school should emphasize socialization and group experiences, rather than greater individualization.

2. *It Should be Closely Related to the Child's Present Experiences and Interests*

No vital learning activities are possible unless the children are genuinely interested and have the experiences necessary to make

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these activities meaningful. You may be greatly interested in, and have much information concerning some topic that seems vital to you. But it will not be a good learning experience for children unless it touches their experience and interests vitally.

3. *It Should Contribute in Some Way to Better Living for the Child Now, as Well as Supply Learnings Necessary for Satisfactory Living Later*

While the school is concerned that these children, when they reach adult life, shall have the tools necessary for effective living, these adult abilities are not the immediate goals of the elementary schools. For they can be achieved best through helping each child develop the tools he needs for improved living now, at his present age and level of growth.

4. *It Should Enable Each Child to Find Something to Do That Is Challenging Because It Is New or More Difficult than Anything He Has Attempted Before*

Growth is an individual matter, but it must be achieved largely in group situations, through group enterprises. In guiding the development of new learning experiences in your school, you will need to be alert to the variety of possibilities they offer. By doing so, you may be able to help each child find the activities that for him mean real growth. There is always danger that certain types of learning activities will be used more frequently than they should, and that other desirable ones will be neglected.²

D. EFFORTS TO DISCOVER AND USE COMMUNITY RESOURCES ARE NOT NEW

For a number of years educational leaders have been alert to the value of community problems and incidents as the sources of interesting school activities. In 1923, Collings (3) described the experiences of a small Missouri school in carrying on such a program. Two recent yearbooks of departments of the National Education Association³ give considerable attention to the environment as a source of learning materials, as does Miss Wofford, in her recent book (21). In 1936, Hanna and others (11) compiled illustrations of youth serving the community, and found a considerable number of instances in which rural youth found vital opportunities for learning beyond the four walls of the classroom.

²If you are interested in more complete statements of criteria by which to select worthwhile activities for learning, see the following: California Curriculum Commission. *Teachers' Guide to Child Development*, pp. 23-42. (See also U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1930, No. 26, pp. 7-13) (1) Heffernan and Potter. "Adapting the Curriculum to the Small Rural School" (12).

³National Education Association, Department of Rural Education, Yearbook, *Newer Types of Instruction in Small Rural Schools*, Chap. VII (15); National Education Association, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, Eighth Yearbook, *Materials of Instruction*, Chap. II (18).

E. CHILDREN CAN SHARE IN DISCOVERING AND USING THESE RESOURCES

In the early days of the school's effort to enrich its activities by reaching out into the community, many teachers justified the excursions, which were the most frequently used form of enrichment, by having children write compositions about them after their completion. Although this may have had real learning value in many instances, it was a very meager use of the situation.⁴

If your children are to get the greatest value from the curriculum enrichment activities you help them to experience, they must share in them to the best of their capacity from the first beginnings. Not only will they help to carry on the activities, once they are planned; they will share the responsibility of planning them. Very young children will, of course, share quite differently than older ones in the development of group and individual enterprises. Yet they will have definite opportunities to share in important decisions.

As you think through possible learning activities for your school for the coming year, you may wish to consider such questions as these:

1. Would these children grow significantly in desirable ways through helping to decide the purposes to be worked for in this particular activity?
2. Would they achieve important learnings through helping to decide what individual and group experiences should be planned, and how they should be carried on?
3. Is it important for them to help evaluate their own activities as they proceed with them?

⁴Two bulletins of the Department of Public Instruction which will be of special value to teachers wishing to enrich the curriculum through extending interests beyond the classroom are: Bulletin 110, *Suggestions for the Development and Use of Curriculum Materials in the Elementary School*, and Bulletin 200, *Expanding the Classroom*.

VIII. YOU CAN PLAN YOUR DAILY AND WEEKLY PROGRAM TO MAKE GREATER USE OF YOUR COMMUNITY'S LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES¹

The use that is made of the local community's resources for learning depends not alone on the teacher's alertness to the possibilities for learning that exist. It depends also on her ability to develop a working schedule for the school that makes possible the use of these opportunities. Much can be done to improve the quality of work in the one-teacher school, where the problem is most difficult, through improving the weekly and daily program.

A. THE CHILD'S ENTIRE DAY MUST BE SPENT PROFITABLY

The child in the one-teacher school has as much time at his disposal during school hours as the child in a graded school; it is the teacher whose time seems to be so inadequate for the many things she wishes to do. Therefore, your problem is to plan the distribution of his time and yours so that his entire day will be spent in genuinely worthwhile activities. This requires:

1. That you, the teacher, must be free to help children in groups and individually, when they need help most
 - a. In planning what they want to and should do
 - b. In securing and organizing needed materials and information
 - c. In summarizing and evaluating their findings and making use of them in solving problems
 - d. In discovering special difficulties and working to remedy them
 - e. In giving suitable expression to their thoughts and ideas
2. That it must be easy for grade lines to be broken down, so that several grade groups, or individual children from several grades, may work together when common interests make this desirable.
3. That children, particularly in the upper grades, must have opportunity to work for fairly long periods without interruption.
4. That there must be time and opportunity for the spontaneous reporting and discussion of things that have interested children and teacher, so that worthwhile leads to school activities can be discovered and so that sympathetic common interests of children and teacher can be maintained.
5. That there must be opportunity for individual instruction and for progress at individual rates, particularly in certain of the skills.

¹ This chapter is a revision of the Suggested Daily Program chart published by the Department of Public Instruction.

B. BLOCK SCHEDULING OF THE DAY'S ACTIVITIES WILL BE HELPFUL

Many teachers have found that thinking in terms of whole "blocks" of time, and of the general types of experiences they wish children to have, is more helpful than to think of many separate classes to be scheduled. They may think in terms of subject matter blocks, although an increasing number of teachers are thinking, rather, in terms of provision for general growth and development. These teachers usually block the day's time under such headings as these:

Getting ready for the day

Receiving general contributions of children and teacher

Planning the day's work

Work periods

Conference periods

Skill periods

Periods for recreation and relaxation

Periods for self-expression

Checking at the close of the day

Even though you still find it necessary to think largely in terms of subject matter periods, these steps in the day's work are important for you to keep in mind, for they will help you to make the children's day more meaningful.

Regardless of the type of blocking you do, arranging your daily program in this way has distinct advantages. Long periods are provided for each of the various subjects or activities; hence children can learn to do concentrated, uninterrupted work. The teacher works with pupils whenever her guidance is needed, and gives individuals or groups specific help, instruction, or evaluation as they need it. Individuals are combined into groups, and smaller groups are combined into larger groups, whenever a purpose or interest shared by several children makes this desirable. Pupils are given a maximum opportunity to direct and evaluate their own work, thus developing traits basically important to them as they grow to maturity.

1. THERE IS REAL ECONOMY IN THE USE OF CHILDREN'S TIME

Each child works with the teacher individually or in a group only when the matter being considered is one familiar to him, one with which he needs help, or one where sharing his experiences with others is desirable for his growth and theirs. The child may be (1) working as a member of a class or group that is receiving help in planning or carrying on some new learning experience, (2) receiving group or individual help in diagnosing or remedying his special difficulties or in developing a new skill, (3) working at some self-directed and self-evaluated activity which has special interest and value for him, or (4) sharing a group experience in the enjoyment

of some interesting experience, beautiful music or painting, or the like. He need not be idle, waiting while something he has already mastered is explained to others in his group, nor need he be given work "just to keep him busy" until others have caught up with him.

2. EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION AND USE OF SUBJECT MATTER IS POSSIBLE

With this type of daily program, it is relatively easy to develop subject matter on an integrated basis. Children achieve reading ability, English usage, handwriting, spelling, and other skills more efficiently when their feeling of need for them motivates necessary drill and causes them to use these skills frequently to accomplish something important to them. The social studies and science become more meaningful when the child sees that the knowledge they include is of vital help to him in understanding something he very much wants to know.

As an example of subject matter integration, reading, with its special vocabularies and techniques, is an integral part of the study of every content subject as well as of life in general. An assignment in geography or history or some other subject, in terms of reading material, is an exercise in reading. A self-assigned responsibility to find out which are harmful and which are desirable roadside flowers will call for carefully directed reading. The activities of an *Our Times Club*, or other club dealing with current affairs, imply much reading. Newspapers, periodicals, books, and library materials are all potential subject matter for reading. The child's need to get information will lead him to the use of the card catalog and other library helps,² and perhaps make him feel the need of developing his own system of filing and caring for materials that he gathers.³ Extensive reading activities of these types will develop in the child reading habits and abilities that are much more useful than those he secures from an isolated reading period alone.

Similarly, other subjects permeate much of the life of the child. As in reading, other subject matter can be learned more effectively if it is experienced when and where the child is eager to use it in clearing up some problem that concerns him. Block scheduling gives a time allotment and an arrangement of activities that make it more easily possible to give the child a truly integrative learning experience.

² For helpful suggestions on the selection and organization for use of library materials see:

National Education Association, Department of Rural Education. Bulletin. *Rural School Libraries* (17).

National Education Association, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. Eighth Yearbook. *Materials of Instruction*, Chap. III (18).

Wofford. *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*, Chap. XIII (21).

³ Suggestions for the organization and use of learning materials in the classroom are given in the following:

National Education Association, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. Yearbook. *Materials of Instruction*. Chaps. IV, V (18).

Wofford. *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*. Chap. XIV (21).

C. INTEGRATED UNITS MAY BE INTRODUCED GRADUALLY

Unless you are very sure that you see clearly what you want to accomplish and how to proceed, you will be wise to move gradually in reorganizing your plan of teaching. All classes in any one subject, such as arithmetic, can best be scheduled in the same quarter of the day. Then you can continue to work with most of these classes just as you have always done, perhaps apportioning a stated amount of time to each grade or group. One of these blocks, perhaps social studies, perhaps English, perhaps arithmetic, you will want to organize according to individual and group needs and interests, rather than as a more formal class for learning and recitation. As rapidly as you feel able to guide this situation effectively you will want to extend this method to other blocks in your program until your entire program is so organized. It may require several years for you to accomplish this fully, but you will have developed a plan that gives every child greater opportunity for worthwhile activity without the confusion that comes from trying to do something you do not understand fully. Then you may be ready to try to carry on a genuinely integrated program.⁴

D. SUGGESTED DAILY PROGRAMS

Two suggested daily programs are shown here to make clear how they can be organized. Program A uses block scheduling as the basis for integration of learning experiences into learning units, so that the entire day's work can be developed in terms of individual growth. Program B schedules subject matter blocks instead, and suggests a way in which part of the work may be developed around children's needs and interests, the rest following whatever plan of organization is customary to the teacher.

In both of these programs each group consists of more than one grade. Group A includes grades VII-VIII; Group B includes grades IV-VI; Group C consists of grades I, II, and III. This grouping is suggested because it has been found to be educationally sound as well as economical of teacher time.⁵ It does not mean that the grades in a group necessarily always work together as a unit. At times the entire school will work together as one group; at other times subdivisions within groups will be necessary, as in developing reading skills among beginners; but for the most part the needs and interests of the children will make it possible for these groups to be used.

A major purpose of both programs is to enable the teacher to use her time most economically in guiding children's learning. Since pupils in Group C are naturally more dependent on the teacher for stimulation and leadership than are the more advanced pupils, in

⁴Two very helpful discussions of actual experiences in developing an integrated program in rural schools are listed here:

Everett. "Progress Toward Integration in a Rural County" (8).

Heffernan and Potter. "Adapting Curriculum to the Small Rural School" (12).

⁵For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see: National Education Association, Department of Rural Education Bulletin. *Organization of Curriculum for One Teacher Schools* (16).

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Schedule of Blocks or Periods***		Group Activities		
Time	Min.**	Group C (Grades 1, 2-3)	Group B (Grades 4-6)	Group A (Grades 7-8)
From arrival at school				
9:00	15-20	Informal Morning Period ^{1†}		
9:15 or 9:20	55-60	Block I—Morning Assembly ²		
		Block II—Work or Conference Period ³		
		Problems arising from major learning units in progress, centering chiefly around interests in social studies ⁴ or science. ⁵	More complex activities than in Group C. Interest largely in "what?" with a beginning of questioning "why?". Interests more extended in space and time.	Still more complex activities, with interest more and more in "why?" and greater ability to generalize and draw conclusions.
10:15	15	Recess		
10:30	90	Block III—Skills Period ⁶		
		Development of tool abilities, with individual needs stressed. Group guidance offered when desirable. Skills in arithmetic and readings ⁸ and other language tools ⁹ included.	In Groups B and A, group lines may often be disregarded and help given individually, or to small groups having a common need. Individual diagnosis and remedial helps, and individual progress in achieving new skills, are emphasized. Children will be working for personal development and growth, rather than to complete teacher-assigned quotas of work.	
12:00	60	Lunch and Play Period ¹⁰		
1:00	75	Block IV—Expression Period ¹¹		
		Development of self-expression through various mediums. Art ¹² and music ¹³ each given emphasis one day a week. Language expression ¹⁴ in various forms.	Similar in inclusion to Group C, but on the interest level of older children.	Similar in type, but on the interest level of still older children.
2:15	15	Recess		
2:30	70-80	Block V—Work or Conference Period		
		Further opportunity to work with major problems, to continue individual work for the development of skills, or to develop minor units. Health ¹⁵ and club activities ¹⁶ provided.	Similar to Block II, or a continuation of the work of Block III, as needed.	Similar to Block II, or a continuation of the work of Block III, as needed.
3:40-3:50	10-20	Block VI—Closing Period ¹⁷		
			All members of Groups B and A	

* This program is suggestive only. Teachers should plan their own, to meet needs of children where they teach.

** All time allotments are flexible, subject to variation from day to day, as needs change.

*** When commences indicated here may be varied, but child planning, awareness of need, and self-evaluation should be planned for.

using either program you will want to make sure that some of the teacher's time is spent with them during each of the four quarters of the day.

In these programs provision is made for all eight grades. Comparatively few schools have all eight grades well represented. Often one or two grades are not found. Sometimes only one or two pupils are in a grade. In many communities it is possible to send grades VII-VIII from the one-teacher school to a central school, thus reducing the number of grades in these schools to six. In such cases, readjustments in grouping will necessarily have to be made. Such readjustments may take the form of groups consisting of grades I, II-III, IV-VI, or grades I-II, III-IV, V-VI, or other groupings that fit the needs of the school. So, too, the programs may be modified to meet the needs of the two-teacher school or of any group that includes more than one grade.

1. SUGGESTIONS FOR USING PROGRAM A

This program is included for the benefit of the more skillful teacher who is ready to move ahead to a higher level of teaching. It is intended, too, to show the less skilled teacher the direction in which she may want to grow.

* (1) Informal morning period

The informal morning period is one of the most important ones of the entire day. The teacher should have any special outside work of her own completed by the time children begin coming at 8:30. She will then be ready to fulfill her function of guidance when they come through talking with them informally about interesting things that have occurred, through sharing her own experiences with them, through helping them care for and learn to arrange the flowers, plants, or other specimens they may have brought with them from home. She will have opportunity to detect any symptoms of communicable disease, and to discover and correct any problems of general appearance that can best be handled privately. All this she will usually do very informally, as it would be done in a friendly home situation. If the teacher is alert to the possibilities of this period, and realizes that the school day officially begins when the first child reaches school, she can use it to set the mood for the entire day and to maintain a feeling of friendly interest in common purposes. This will be of inestimable value in making her school a worthwhile place for children to be.

(2) Morning assembly

The morning assembly period should climax the informal morning survey, be a bright spot in the day's experiences, and lead on to regular activities later in the day. The Bible selection

* Numbers of suggestions correspond to Arabic numbers on Program A.

to be read and the song selections should be chosen with care. Interesting observations relating to science and nature, or interesting news items might be shared here with the whole school. Special activities developed by one group or class might be presented. Children should share in planning and carrying on these activities.

The period should end with a brief time to discuss what is to be done during the day. Together with the informal morning period which precedes it, it should take care in large part of the first three items listed on page 80: getting ready for the day, receiving general contributions, and planning the day's work. They are a very important part of the day and should be made as meaningful as possible.

(3) Work or conference period

An important characteristic of units of learning is that through them children engage in genuinely meaningful tasks which are important to them. If it becomes clear, during the brief time for planning at the close of the morning assembly period, that every group and individual has important work to be done and knows how to proceed with it, this time can very well be a work period with the teacher helping groups or individuals according to their needs.

Any number of specific activities may go on during a work period. Some children may be searching the library and the schoolroom files for sources of information, while others are reading to get and organize information. At times their activity may involve construction work, and be of a somewhat noisy type. Whatever is necessary to be done, the teacher and pupils together will have planned so that all groups can work satisfactorily together. Noisy activities will not be planned for one group when others must do quiet, concentrated work.

It is quite probable that some group will need to use at least a part of this period for conferences, with or without the teacher. Conferences may be for one or more of several purposes, such as the following:

To plan work to be done, and apportion responsibility for doing it.

To exchange and evaluate information.

To organize individual contributions into a usable group contribution.

To share interesting or pleasurable experiences with others.

To see whether we are accomplishing what we set out to do, and if not to discover why, and what should be done about it.

(4) Social Studies

Social studies deal largely with man's efforts to adjust himself as an individual to the various groups of which he is a member. Opportunity is provided to use large units of learning which involve subject matter related to history, civics, geography, or science, as well as related arithmetic, language, spelling, art and music experiences, and the like. This period of the day focuses attention on social studies (or science) problems with which the class or group is concerned. Related interests in other areas of development will be carried over into other periods of the day, as a part of group activities under the teacher's direction, or as pupil self-directed activities during out-of-class periods.⁶

(5) Science and nature study

There should be many activities in science and nature study in the one-teacher school because of the children's familiarity and close association with nature. The informal morning period, if properly used, will open up valuable leads. The teacher should try to develop some units whose chief purpose is the understanding of significant phenomena of science and the appreciation of nature; but the children's experiences should not be limited to these units. Incidental group or individual interests which will lead to self-directed activities during out-of-class time and out-of-school hours should be encouraged. It should be possible to build up a vital and informative science and nature study program in this way.⁷

(6) Skills period⁸

The motives for acquiring skills, and considerable practice in using them, arise from activities growing out of genuine interests and needs of children. But it is often necessary to help children discover the particular techniques they will find most efficient, and to give them carefully guided practice until they have mastered these techniques sufficiently to use them independently. Hence a skills period is provided, when the children may have the teacher's guidance in the development of whatever tool abilities are needed.

It is probable that no two children will need exactly the same help or the same amount of practice in each skill. Some children,

⁶ For suggestions for the development of the social studies program, see Bulletin 410 of the Department of Public Instruction, entitled *A Tentative Chart Showing the Scope and Sequence of a Social Studies Program*, and Bulletin 418, *School Living for Social Purposes*. In addition the following references will be helpful:

California Curriculum Commission. *Teachers' Guide to Child Development* (1).

California Curriculum Commission. *Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades* (2).

Gustin and Hayes. *Activities in the Public School* (10).

Hanna. *Youth Serves the Community* (11).

Tippett. *Schools for a Growing Democracy* (20).

⁷ Croxton, *Science in the Elementary School* (4) will prove helpful as a reference on this phase of the curriculum. Chapters in *The Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades* (2), and in the 1938 Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education (15) are also helpful.

⁸ Two books of special value to the teacher who wishes to see the relationship of skills development to the major activities of an integrated program are: *Curriculum Records of the Children's School* (14), and the *Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades* (2).

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for example, will need a great deal of practice in handwriting, and very little in arithmetic, while others will need very little in language usage but a great deal in arithmetic. Hence the skills period is not separated into sub-divisions of definite length for separate skills. It is expected, rather, that the teacher will plan with each pupil how his time should be spent to give him the abilities he needs most.⁹

(7) Arithmetic

The major purpose in this area of practice is to develop needed skills in computation, as well as useful arithmetical understandings. If arithmetic is to be a really usable tool, children must grasp its relationship to real problems of living. Hence there should be a very close association between the work of this period and the major units of work and important incidental experiences that furnish the core of the curriculum.¹⁰

Computational skills are consciously needed by different individuals at varying stages of maturity and are developed at varying rates. Consequently this work should be so conducted that maximum opportunity for individual growth is provided, and no child has to waste time because he works too slowly or too rapidly for the group.

(8) Reading

The purpose of this work is to help each child develop his reading abilities as fully as possible through mastery of the mechanics of reading; hence procedures and time used will vary to suit individual needs. The teacher will usually work with each grade in Group C separately and, when advisable, with individuals in developing reading skills. In Groups A and B there will be greater possibilities of using ability grouping rather than grade grouping, and there will be cases which need individual help. A great deal of practice in reading will come during other parts of the day, when children are reading to get information, or to convey information to others, when they are reading for the fun of it, and in other situations. Here they receive needed helps so that other reading can be done more easily and effectively.

(9) Language tools

Skills in the use of the English language will need to be worked for directly, in addition to the meaningful practice children get in connection with major units of work. Drill should be planned in terms of individual needs, however, rather than as a general class requirement. Some children will require very little drill for mastery

⁹ Helpful discussions of individualized instruction in the small rural school will be found in the following:

Dunn and Everett "An Experiment in a Rural School" (6).

National Education Association, Department of Rural Education. Yearbook. *Newer Types of Instruction in Small Rural Schools*. Chap. VIII. (15).

Wofford. *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*, Chaps. VI, X. (21).

¹⁰ For a further presentation of this viewpoint see Bulletin 360 of the Department of Public Instruction, *Quantitative Aspects of Experiencing in the Elementary School*.

of correct language forms; others will require a great deal. Similar differences in need will be found in handwriting and spelling, and in other language skills.

As Mrs. Green suggests in her chapter on the language arts in the Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education (15), language teaching calls for rich experiences with many kinds of materials, not for dependence on a single text.

(10) Lunch and play period

This, too, is a very important part of the day. If health principles which are being taught by the school are to become a part of daily living, they must be practiced in school as well as out. Hence, there should be a definite lunch period of about twenty minutes so that hurried eating is avoided. Hands should always be washed in clean water before food is handled, and the actual lunch period should be a pleasant social time.

The alert teacher sees this as an opportunity for growth in social adjustment, and helps the children to have satisfying experiences in using socially accepted practices in eating. Thus, if these are already a part of the child's home experience, the teacher emphasizes their value by helping to maintain them; if they are not, she helps to develop them. She also realizes that taking time to put waste materials and used utensils where they belong after eating is a helpful way of establishing some very desirable habits.¹¹

Following the luncheon period there will be informal play at times, and at times organized games. Sometimes older children or the teacher will teach new games to an interested group. At other times the activities will be spontaneously organized. This part of the noon hour, as well as the recess periods, offers valuable opportunities for healthful activities and for important learnings, especially in the area of social adjustment.

(11) Expression period

Much, though not all, of the activity engaged in at this time will be directly carried over from the work or conference period in the morning. But it is important to recognize that all children need to find ways of expressing their ideas and feelings through one or more of several mediums. Hence the purpose of this period is to help children discover avenues or forms of expression through language, dramatics, music, crafts, and other arts, and to develop effectiveness in using these forms of expression.

A group conference to plan how to present their findings about community health in an interesting way is an experience in self-expression. Listening to beautifully written prose or poetry, or to music, is another. Composing an imaginative picture or story is still another. Anything which contributes to the child's awareness

¹¹ In addition to instances described in this Bulletin, descriptions of how teachers have conducted the lunch period in a rural school satisfactorily and happily will be found in Dunn and Everett (7), and Wofford (21).

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of good standards of expression, or to his skill in attaining them, may be considered important for this purpose.¹²

(12) Art

The work of the art period includes the development of skills and appreciations that are needed to express ideas derived from experiences in related areas of work, as well as to provide skills needed for self-directed activities of children who have a special interest in art expression. Art activities whose immediate aim is the extension and enrichment of the child's experiences are also included.

(13) Music

In addition to songs in morning assembly and at other appropriate times throughout the day, a period of thirty to thirty-five minutes for instruction in music is provided one day a week. The teacher may divide the time between the older and younger pupils, having one group work with related activities while she is busy with the other group. There are many valuable experiences in music in addition to singing. The children should help discover these; some of them may then become sources of self-directed activities for children who want to experience music in other ways than through the use of their voices.

(14) Language expression

In these activities major attention is given to developing speech and writing that is interesting, accurate, and pleasing. The subject matter for writing or speech may grow out of any activity or experience that has importance to the individual child. At times the period will be devoted to the organization of materials, and their development into oral or written reports, as an outgrowth of the morning work or conference period. At times some children will be interested in individual composition of poetry or prose growing out of their own personal interests. Opportunity to hear fine examples of language expression will also be provided.

Interesting, accurate, and pleasing ways of expressing ideas may come from the children themselves, as well as from masterpieces written for children. Children of all ages should be encouraged to evaluate their own written and spoken productions, with respect to points the group agrees are important.

(15) Health

The principles underlying health care should permeate all the activities of school life. Many health learnings will be developed through use of incidental opportunities arising during the informal morning period, the lunch and play period, and as a part of major learning units. Certain problems may require special study. Some

¹² For descriptions of valuable experiences in art, music, and dramatics see references (2), (15), (18), and (19).

units in health may be developed by the entire school, each group sharing in the development through assuming responsibility for such portions of the unit as are within the limits of its abilities and interests. Other problems of health or safety may be attacked by single groups. For example, a health and safety hazards survey might be made in connection with social studies, or as a separate unit of work.¹³

(16) Club activities

One period a week may be given over to any club activities that provide experiences which the teacher thinks will meet essential needs of the pupils. An *Our Times Club* or other club dealing with current affairs, a *Travel Club*, a *Hobby Club*, a *Host and Hostess Club*, or the like, would provide experiences which develop ease in types of situations very common in American life.¹⁴

(17) Closing period

If children are to develop independence and thoroughness of working habits, the practice of taking stock of their accomplishments before leaving work for the day is an important one. It is also important to form habits of putting materials away and seeing that everything is in good condition before leaving. Hence time should be allowed for it on the program.

(18) Centers of interest

If all children are to engage in genuinely worthwhile activities during the entire school day, generous provision must be made for things for them to do during free periods, when other work is completed and they are at liberty to choose for themselves. This must be much more varied and more intrinsically interesting and worthwhile to children than much of the so-called "seat work" to which we are accustomed. The development of centers of interest, where children may work, browse, or relax—whichever is appropriate—have been found a helpful partial solution of the problem in many schools.¹⁵

A comprehensive general discussion of a reading center, a science center, and an art center, in Gustin and Hayes, *Activities in the Public School*, suggests the possibilities of such centers.

¹³ See Grout, *Handbook of Health Education* (9), and Gustin and Hayes *Activities in the Public Schools* (10), for helpful suggestions concerning health in the rural schools.

¹⁴ Descriptions of club activities actually carried on in small rural schools are given by Dunn and Everett (7) and Wofford (21).

¹⁵ For other suggestions as to ways in which the child may use his time when not in class or conference period see:

California Curriculum Commission *Teachers' Guide to Child Development* (1), and *Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades* (2).

Dunn and Everett, *Four Years in a Country School* (7).

Wofford, *Modern Education in the Small Rural School* (21).

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B. DAILY PROGRAM ARRANGED IN SUBJECT BLOCKS*

Time	Min.**	Schedule of Blocks or Periods***	Group or Class Activities	
			Group C (Grades 1, 2-3)	Group A (Grades 7-8)
From arrival at school		Informal Morning Period ^{1†}		
9:00	15-20	Block I—Morning Assembly ²	All children	
9:15 or 9:20	55-60	Block III—Geography—Science— Health ³	Conversation, reading, construction activities, and the like, carried on by entire group at times, and at times by small groups or individuals.	Problem-type activities, similar to Group B, but concerned more with "why?".
10:15	15	Recess	All	
10:30	40	Block III—Reading ⁴	Reading from experiences plus much help in developing needed reading abilities.	Reading activities adapted to individual needs, for extension of interests and to further the development of reading abilities.
11:10	50	Block IV—Arithmetic ⁵	Informal in first grade. Development of understandings through meaningful experiences in all grades.	Work for understandings as well as skills. Individual progress methods are particularly suitable.
12:00	60	Lunch and Play Period ⁶	All	Similar in type to Group B.
1:00	75	Block V—Language Expression— Language Tools ⁷ Spelling Hand writing Arts	Opportunity for much free expression in natural situations. Literature experiences included. Art, spelling, and handwriting closely related to other activities, rather than isolated.	Similar to Groups C and B, but with more mature standards.
2:15	15	Recess	All	
2:30	40	Block VI—Reading	Individual or group activities, with special emphasis on reading for pleasure.	Informational reading related to other subjects, or reading for pleasure.
3:20	40	Block VII—History—Civics ⁸ Music ¹⁰ Club Activities ¹¹	Children dismissed or given free period early, except on music day. Centers of interest ¹³ valuable for free time.	Continuation of work of Block II, or similar work in history—civics. Participation in club activities.
3:50	10	Closing Period ¹²		Similar to Group B.

* This program is suggestive only. Each teacher should plan her own, so she will understand it thoroughly.
 ** All time allotments are flexible, subject to variation from day to day, as needs change.

2. SUGGESTIONS FOR USING PROGRAM B

This program is included for the teacher who wishes to make her school as much as possible a place where child growth and development take place along broad lines, but who finds it best to do so within the framework of a subject matter organization of the curriculum.

(1) * Informal morning period

See Suggestion 1, Program A, page 84.

(2) Morning assembly

See Suggestion 2, Program A, page 84.

(3) Geography—Science—Health

If integrated units within the science and social studies fields seem desirable in a school, this period will be given over to unit work, irrespective of subject matter lines. Care will be taken that important phases of science and health are included, as well as geography and other social studies materials.

If it seems best not to use such units, geography may be given three days a week and science and health each one day. For further suggestions concerning science and health, see Suggestions 5 and 15 on Program A, pages 86 and 89.

(4) Reading

See Suggestion 8, Program A, page 87.

(5) Arithmetic

See Suggestion 7, Program A, page 87.

(6) Lunch and play period

See Suggestion 10, Program A, page 88.

(7) Language expression

Language expression and language tools should receive major attention four days a week, and art one day a week. It will probably be best to devote from twenty minutes to a half hour daily to spelling and handwriting. These should be taught by individual progress methods, each child learning to know his own needs and how to meet them under the teacher's guidance. Enough time will be devoted to language tools to master them, but the major emphasis will be on language expression, both oral and written.

For further discussion of language tools and language expression, see Suggestions 9 and 14, Program A, pages 87 and 89.

(8) Art

See Suggestion 12, Program A, page 89.

(9) History—Civics

If integrated units in science and social studies are being used, this period three days a week will be a continuation of Block II. If this is not being done, regular work in history and civics will be carried on. The other two days will be devoted to music and to club activities. For further discussion of social studies activities, see Suggestion 4, Program A, page 86.

* Numbers of notes correspond to Arabic numbers on Program B.

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(10) Music

See Suggestion 13, Program A, page 89.

(11) Club activities

If more than forty-five minutes is desirable for this period, time from Block VI may be added. For a discussion of possibilities, see Suggestion 16, Program A, page 90.

(12) Closing period

See Suggestion 17, Program A, page 90.

(13) Centers of interest

See Suggestion 18, Program A, page 90.

E. SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

Helpful discussions of the organization of the daily schedule of activities, as well as of the general plan of curriculum organization, will be found in the following books:

California Curriculum Commission. *Teacher's Guide to Child Development*, Chap. IV (1).

Dunn and Everett. *Four Years in a Country School*, pp. 12-25 (7).

Gustin and Hayes. *Activities in the Public School*, Chap. V. (10).

National Education Association, Department of Rural Education. *Bulletin. Organization of Curriculum for One-Teacher Schools*. (16).

Tippett. *Schools for a Growing Democracy*, Chap. V (20).

Wofford. *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*, Chaps. V, XII (21).

IX. YOU CAN MAKE YOUR SCHOOL A WORTHWHILE PLACE FOR CHILDREN

Even with the limitations offered by the most handicapped one-teacher school, worthwhile educational experiences can be provided if the teacher is alert to the possibilities of the situation. For there is no school or community which does not offer some opportunity for enriching the lives of children and extending their interests and their desire to know.

A. TEACHER GROWTH SHOULD PARALLEL CHILD GROWTH

Every teacher who is thinking and planning her work in terms of child growth and development along broad lines realizes that her own growth is as great as that of the children; sometimes it seems to her even greater. She discovers that her knowledge of the things which interest children is of necessity extended and made more accurate. She finds that there are many interesting things about her to be known and understood which have not previously attracted her attention. She discovers, too, that as she works with children she becomes more sensitive to what is happening to them, how they think and what they feel about matters that are important to them.

It may be helpful, therefore, to consider some signs or evidences of growth which teachers might look for in themselves. Because these will vary with different people and in varying circumstances, they can be indicated only in a general way. But many teachers will find it helpful to evaluate their own work from time to time, perhaps by keeping a personal folder in which a report of growth is placed. This might take the form of notes showing development in such phases of growth as these:

1. GROWTH IN AWARENESS OF THE REAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN—PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL

What evidence can you discover that you really sense children's varying needs more completely than you did earlier? That you are thinking less in terms of subject matter to be mastered and more in terms of what this particular child needs to help him to grow into a happier, better adjusted person?

2. GROWTH IN ALERTNESS TO THE POSSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING IN THE CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENT

Are you more alert than you were to all the learning values that may exist in the everyday happenings about you, such as the bringing in of a dead cicada, the building of a new house in the neighborhood, or a new family moving into the district with children to attend your school? Are you more sensitive to the forms

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of beauty which can be discovered near at hand? Are you more aware of the serious gaps in the children's experiences outside of school, and of the ways in which you can help to overcome these inadequacies as a part of your school program?

3. GROWTH IN AWARENESS OF SIGNIFICANT CHILD GROWTH AS IT OCCURS

Do you sense, more than you did, the importance of the bits of growth that occur from day to day—never very great and therefore likely to be overlooked, yet adding up to very important growth for a particular child? Do you sense that many of the most important developments of your children—broad understandings, improved attitudes, desirable habits of behavior—come about in just such ways?

4. GROWTH IN ABILITY TO REACT OBJECTIVELY TO PROBLEMS AND SITUATIONS WHICH ARISE

Do you see, in a child's behavior, the working of certain fundamental principles of human behavior rather than the peculiarities or "stubbornness" of the particular child? Can you, more than you did, evaluate children's behavior in terms of what is reasonable to expect at his level of growth, rather than by adult standards?

5. GROWTH IN ABILITY TO ESTABLISH LEARNING SITUATIONS WHICH ARE ADEQUATE TO MEET CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Have you improved in the ability to establish the kind of school-room environment that is helpful in developing wholesome, well-balanced personalities? Have you gained skill in the use of the various mediums and materials which the children need to use—skill in manipulating such materials and in recording them; skill in expressing your personal ideas and feelings through some medium that particularly interests you; skill in the use of your speaking voice?

Are you able to use the children's ideas and other contributions with increasing effectiveness? Do you sense more readily than you did when a child's offering should be accepted and used, considering his needs and those of the group? Are you gaining skill in helping children enlarge or organize their contributions and relate them to what the group needs at the moment?

B. ALL CHILDREN ARE ENTITLED TO AN ENRICHED SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Because of the widespread movement for merging small school districts and establishing schools with several teachers to replace the one-teacher school, there is a frequent tendency to consider it not worthwhile to expend any effort toward the improvement of the latter. This is quite understandable, but regrettable, particu-

larly because of the probability that it will be many years before all or nearly all one- and two-teacher schools are replaced by larger ones. In the meantime several generations of children pass through these schools. It seems very unwise to postpone for even a short time the kind of educational program we believe necessary for all children. Certainly it is an unwarranted neglect of a special group.

Fortunately, there need be no feeling that effort given to improving the work of these schools is wasted. In large part the methods and procedures suggested here, and particularly the opportunities especially available to the rural environment, are equally suited to the graded school, and can be carried over into the new situation when it becomes available. Then, too, improving the school's service on the present level may be an effective way of arousing the desire for a still more adequate provision, thus leading to the demand for the larger unit.

It must always be remembered that the establishment of larger administrative and attendance units does not in and of itself produce a better level of classroom and general school work; it merely provides the opportunity for it. Hence any improvement of the teacher's methods and procedures, and of her alertness to possibilities of learning in the environment of children, will be of value later as well as in the present situation. It is with these thoughts in mind that the opportunities especially available to the teacher in the small school in a rural area are suggested.

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* The books starred make up a minimum list for teachers who wish to secure the most authoritative materials dealing directly with the problems of the small rural school.

** This book is now out of print, but is available in some libraries and is included here because of its special importance.

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